



THE INDEPENDENT

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IN THE TUESDAY REVIEW + MEDIA

Ten years on, Lockerbie still awaits its moment of justice and truth

BY MARY BRAID

IT WAS a poignant moment. As the people of Lockerbie gathered at the town's Dryfesdale cemetery yesterday with the American relatives of those who perished on Pan Am flight 103, a child clasped the hand of an adult and gazed up at the Border skies in which the Boeing 747 was blown apart exactly 10 years ago.

Yesterday was an international day of remembrance for the 259 passengers who died in the terrorist attack, and the 11 Lockerbie victims killed when the plane crashed to earth. While some 20 American families travelled to Scotland, British relatives of the bomb victims came together at Westminster Cathedral.

The Westminster gathering was designed to take attention away from Lockerbie, where many would now like the town to move on from the tragedy.

Even Bill Clinton took a few moments away from the upheavals of presidential impeachment and the Iraq crisis to remember the crash. Under clammy skies he led a short service at Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia, and dedicated a cairn of 270 stones to the dead – one for every victim.

Another service was held simultaneously in Syracuse, in Upstate New York, on the campus of the city university that lost 35 students when the plane was bombed out of the sky. They had been returning home for the Christmas holidays.

Yesterday was not just a day of pain, but also of frustration. Ten years after the tragedy, Western governments are yet to deliver justice to the families of those who died.

Though there have been many false dawns, these are more hopeful times. The US and British governments have agreed to proposals for Scottish justice to be exercised on foreign soil and Libya has backed the scheme for two of its nationals – suspects in the outrage – to be tried by an international court.

Yesterday the politicians were still promising the families they would bring those responsible for the tragedy to justice. Tony Blair, promising to enlist the help of South African president Nelson Mandela to try the Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Gaddafi.



Friends and relatives of the 270 victims of the air crash attending a memorial service at Dryfesdale Cemetery in Lockerbie yesterday on the 10th anniversary of the disaster

Jeff Mitchell

Colonel Gaddafi was mean while telling Dutch television he wanted the men accused of planting the Lockerbie bomb tried by an international court.

The diplomatic initiatives have warmed the heart of those who have fought to keep the atrocity in the public eye. But the past decade has also built up distrust of politicians, with families now convinced that their own governments failed to pass

on warnings that a terrorist attack was imminent.

Politicians, it seems, continue to speak with forked tongues. Yesterday's statement by Colonel Gaddafi actually muddied the waters. For he called for judges from 'America, Libya, England and other countries' to be involved when the plan acceptable to the US and Britain specifies three Scottish judges.

The frustration with politicians was alluded to yesterday at Dryfesdale during the low key ceremony at which the sole official event was the laying of a wreath by the Duke of Edinburgh at the town's cemetery.

Fr Patrick Keegans, the priest who provided spiritual help to the victims' families, spoke almost directly to the dead. 'You will see us laying wreaths at your stone,' he said. 'We want you to be sure that these wreaths are not hollow empty gestures but a statement and declaration full of promise.'

'Ten years ago, for you and for us, a bomb was ticking. Know this, there is another bomb ticking, the irresistible bomb of justice and truth. Know this, that our wreath-laying today is not a symbolic gesture. It is a declaration that we will not rest until we have justice and truth, until all responsible for your deaths are held accountable.'

Yesterday, the families made yet another appeal to their politicians to get it right this time. They asked Mr Blair and President Clinton not to jeopardise the prospect of a trial of the two Libyan suspects with threats of renewed military action in the Middle East in the wake of the Iraqi bombings.

Clinton wins record approval in the polls

BY MARY DEJEVSKY
in Washington

100 points, banishing fears that the markets would be unsettled by Mr Clinton's plight.

While insisting impeachment was "permanent" and had brought "profound disgrace" to Mr Clinton, former presidents Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford called for a Senate censure rather than a trial as the first step towards healing a national wound that was "grievous and deepening". In a joint *New York Times* article they said Mr Clinton should acknowledge he lied under oath in exchange for a deal that he would not be prosecuted for perjury when he left office.



Calls for a compromise also come from editorials in newspapers across America.

Washington in crisis, Pages 10 and 11

Blair under fire over support for bombing

BY COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

TONY BLAIR last night was under fire from all sides for supporting President Bill Clinton in Operation Desert Fox without a clearly laid set of political objectives to be achieved by the bombing in Iraq.

The "success" claimed by Mr Blair when he announced the ending of the bombing on Saturday was turning into a public relations fiasco as RAF pilots, a Labour peer, and the Tories criticised the campaign.

Downing Street responded with claims that the bombing had been targeted at sites including the presidential bunker in Baghdad to fuel Saddam Hussein's fears of a coup. "The specific thinking behind these targets is to build on to the fears

lots who said they were 'gutted' at being ordered to call off their last raid could not see the 'full picture'. With all the RAF crews back safely in Kuwait, the Tories ended the cross-party support for the air strikes and demanded to know what the point of them had been.

William Hague, the Tory leader, last night said Saddam should not just be 'kept in his cage but knocked off his perch'.

In Baghdad, Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz said the strikes had killed 62 military personnel. He added that the attacks had ended UN arms inspections. "The attacks 'killed Unicom'" he said, referring to the UN weapons inspectors.

Saddam breathes easy, page 5

Alone but Traumatised



This is 'Pepper' - he is at our Sanctuary in Ireland but depressed and pining. His close friend 'Salt' was brutally slain. Youths got into the field and rode Salt until she dropped. Salt was beaten with an iron bar before the bar was thrust through her eye into her brain.

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Doctors battle to save octuplets

DOCTORS WERE fighting last night to save eight babies born to a woman in a Texas hospital.

On Sunday, Nkem Chukwu became the first woman to give birth to a living set of octuplets. All eight were in critical condition yesterday, with the newborn on ventilators. The oldest child, born at 22oz 12 days ago, was making progress, according to Leonard Weisman, head of the neonatology department at Texas Children's Hospital.

Dr Weisman said premature babies such as these have an 85 per cent chance of surviving. "They are all critically ill, though several are showing improvement," he said.

Mrs Chukwu was so anxious to keep her babies growing inside her that she spent three weeks lying still on a special hospital bed with her head tipped at a drastic angle to the floor.

Her uterus was so crowded that doctors weren't even sure how many foetuses were in there. They offered to abort one

BY ANDREW GUMBEL
Los Angeles

or two to give the others a better chance of survival, but the tenacious Texas woman turned them down. Instead, she offered to give up food and drink and go on to an intravenous drip to give the babies more room.

The last seven, five girls and two boys weighing between 10.3 and 26 ounces, were delivered by Caesarean section at St Luke's Episcopal Hospital in Houston. They were immediately whisked into intensive care at another hospital where they joined their sister who was born vaginally 12 days earlier.

It is likely to be at least two months before the babies - assuming they survive - will be fit to go home. The older one was born 15 weeks premature and the others 13 weeks premature, a stage of development that would give a single foetus an 85 per cent chance of survival. The statistics for multiple births

are not known, but are likely to be significantly bleaker.

It was a remarkable achievement for all eight to make it out of the womb alive. Doctors praised the attitude of the 27-year-old mother, who was described by her paediatrician, Patti Savick, as "a very unusual woman, both physically and personally."

"She is quite tall, at least six feet, and very focused, a very spiritual, serene person," Dr Savick said. "She did what she needed to do."

"She was a model patient," said Brian Kirshon, an obstetrician specialising in high-risk births, who delivered the babies. "I think she is remarkable in that she was able to tolerate such conditions. She kept a positive attitude and was willing to do whatever it took."

Both Mrs Chukwu and her husband, Iyke, a respiratory therapist, are naturalised immigrants from Nigeria who had been trying unsuccessfully to

have children for some time.

Using hormone fertility treatment to stimulate the production of ova, Mrs Chukwu became pregnant with triplets at the end of last year but lost them in the early stages.

She became pregnant again almost immediately and quickly



Doctors Brian Kirshon (left), Patti Savick and Leonard Weisman said the babies' condition was critical Reuters

understood she was carrying a large number of foetuses; she spent two-and-a-half-months in hospital under close observation.

After the first birth, Mrs Chukwu was given strong drugs to halt uterine contractions, drugs that forced doctors to perform a post-natal operation yes-

terday to stop internal bleeding. The Caesarean was attended by 25 medical professionals.

Her case is likely to trigger debate about the wisdom of fertility treatment leading to multiple pregnancies, given the dangers and costs involved. While the children risk conditions such as cerebral palsy, blindness and heart and lung defects, the mother exposes herself to the risk of diabetes or acute high blood pressure.

"The human being was meant to have one baby," Dr Kirshon said. "It will be a remarkable feat if all the babies survive."

Mrs Chukwu is expected to stay in hospital until the end of the week, by which time doctors will have a better idea of her babies' chances of survival.

"All are being kept sleepy and quiet under a plastic blanket on a warming bed and have been treated with surfactant replacement to help with premature lung disease," Dr Weisman

said. "All infants are receiving intravenous sugar and fluids."

The medical costs alone are likely to reach half a million dollars - raising just the first of many questions about financial arrangements for the young couple, who live in a modest neighbourhood in south-west Houston.

Although doctors were careful to release as little information about the family as possible, it seems they have not yet tried to secure sponsors or other forms of assistance. In stark contrast to Mandy Allwood, the British woman who hired PR representatives to sell her story to the tabloids, the Chukwus wrapped the pregnancy in a veil of secrecy.

"[Mrs Chukwu] has gone to remarkable lengths to stay away from publicity and stay in a position where these children could be born," said a lawyer brought in by the hospital to deal with a deluge of media interest.

Parents of previous multiple-birth babies in the United States have sought corporate sponsorship and assistance through private fund-raising, with varying degrees of success. When Bobbi McCaughey gave birth to septuplets in Iowa last year, all of whom have survived, she and her husband Kenny were offered a newly built house, a 15-seater van, car seats, strollers, limitless nappies and a 16-year supply of apple juice and apple sauce.

By contrast, Linden and Jacqueline Thompson, parents of five surviving sextuplets born around the same time as the septuplets in Washington DC, received next to nothing until news reports suggested their raw deal was due to the fact they were black while the McCaugheys were white.

They have since received nappies, an offer of free day-care and clothing - but no car and only a reduced price on a house that they still cannot afford.

Author's £5m bequest provides poetic justice for Oxford college

BY JOHN WALSH

THE CONTROVERSIAL world of Oxford poetry received a pleasant shock yesterday with the news that an eccentric, and mostly unread, British author has bequeathed £5m to an Oxford college, to endow a fellowship specifically devoted to teaching students how to write poetry.

Christopher Tower, who died on 21 September aged 83, set up a foundation before his death for the creation of two senior teaching posts at his old college, Christchurch. One is a junior research fellowship in Greek mythology. The other, more importantly, is Poetry Studentship - a modest title for a major academic job, teaching and lecturing in the black arts of metre, rhyme, scansion and sublimity, across the university.

Mr Tower's bequest will also pay for the running of the Christopher Tower Poetry Prize, an annual competition open to sixth-formers, in which the winning versifiers will secure a prize of £1,000 for their school as well as £1,000 for themselves. Mr Tower has thus cunningly ensured that schools all over the nation will encourage their students to write poetry at prize-winning levels of brilliance.

The Tower bequest could hardly have come at a better time for the Oxford English faculty. Ever since the Oxford University Press publishing house voted to drop its poetry list on 20 November, a state of hostility and resentment has prevailed in the university town. Expressions of sympathy for the 36 sacked poets - some of them world-famous, some tipped for the Poet Laureateship, some about to celebrate their career-crowning collected works - have filled the newspapers.

Heated views have been exchanged between university administrators, English literature dons and the unsmiling businessmen at the OUP - the press is owned by the university, and its decisions are carried out with the dons' blessing. "I am ashamed of my university press," writes Jon Stallworthy, English tutor at Wolfson College, in the current *Oxford Magazine*, calling the cancellation of the list "an act of vandalism".

Christopher Tower's bequest, therefore, gives the university a chance to make amends for its apparently philis-



Christopher Tower, painted by James Gunn

published only by paying for it himself

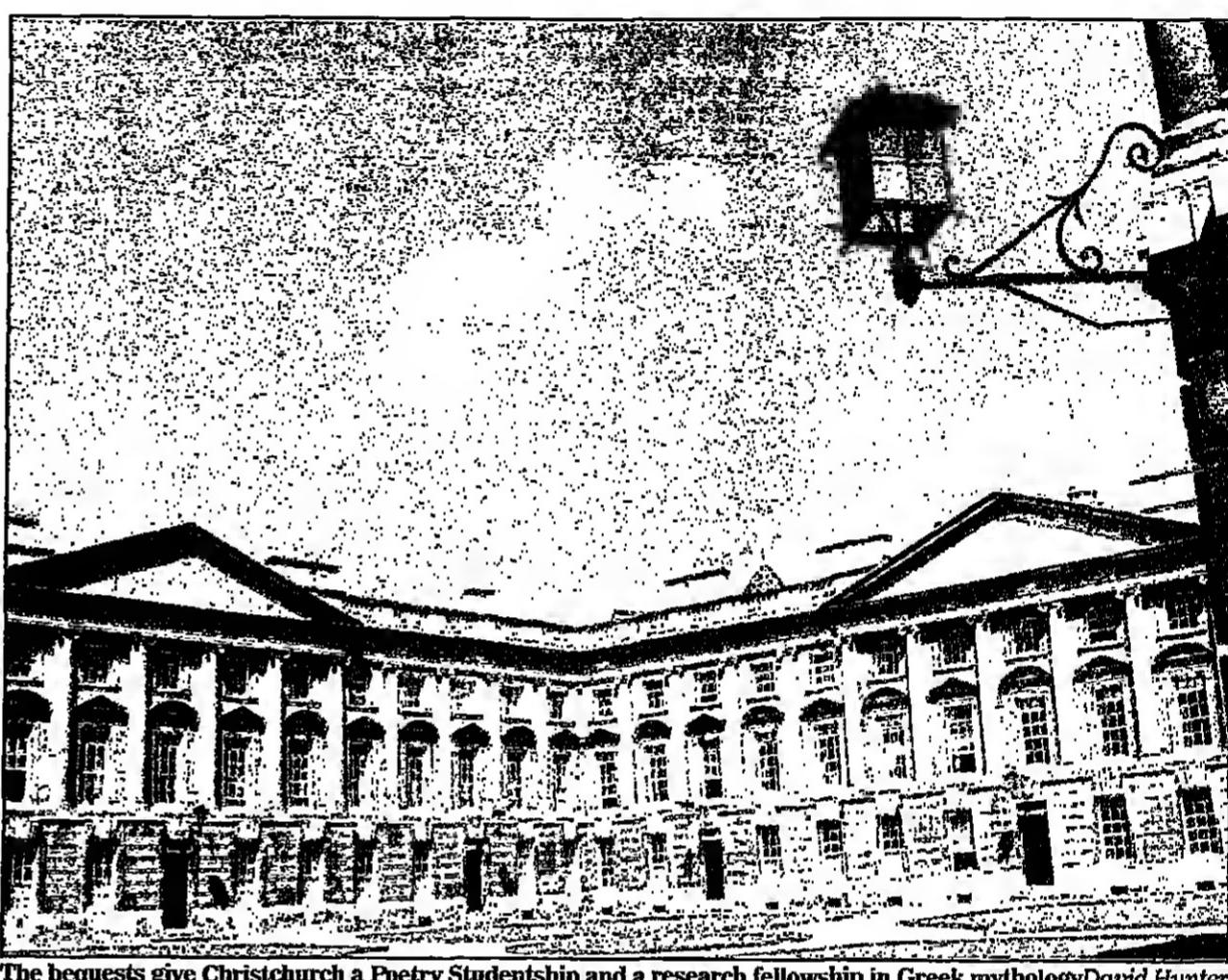
He was born in 1915 to a family of rich, property-owning diplomats. His father died in the First World War and, when his mother remarried, Christopher was packed off to a boarding school.

After graduating he went to Baghdad as private secretary to Sir Basil Newton, the British ambassador, learnt to speak Arabic, founded a camel corps and strode about in chieftain robes rather like Lawrence of Arabia. During the war he transferred to Libya, where after hostilities ceased, he was empowered by the Foreign Office to set up a monarchy in Libya, under the Emir King Idris. For the next six years he acted as chief adviser to the king. His advice ranged from high policy to low fashion statements. When the king wanted to have a sign put up over his palace saying "Palace of King Idris" in neon lights, Tower gently informed him that there was no similar sign at the end of the Mall saying "Palace of King George VI".

Then, abruptly, he gave it all up. He went on epic treks with Wilfred Thesiger. He lived a solitary life. No one seems to have known him well, not even his elder sister, Pamela. He never discussed what happened to make him leave Libya. He developed odd, quasi-Arab habits. He was insouciant about the earth tremors that occasionally rocked his huge apartment in Athens, which he furnished as an English stately home complete with heavy chandeliers. When the next tremors came, he refused to be taken to safety, being too absorbed in one of the enormous jigsaws to which he was addicted.

He published several books of poems, most of them spectacularly unreadable retellings of ancient Persian legends. "I don't think he amounted to anything as a poet, I'm afraid," said his friend, Francis King, the novelist, yesterday. "But I loved his conversation."

He is buried in the village graveyard at Minstead in the New Forest, beside the grave of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. His friends are trying to persuade the vicar to let them put up a headstone based on a portrait showing Christopher Tower dressed in Arab finery, complete with imposing Tuareg dagger.



The bequests give Christchurch a Poetry Studentship and a research fellowship in Greek mythology David Hunter



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Santas on transvestite charge

BY JOHN LICHFIELD
in Paris

LIFE IS fraught for Santa Claus in the last days of December - but nowhere more so than in France. Freelance Santa Clauses who haunt the shopping boulevards of Paris are being hounded by the police, accused of being "transvestites" or "transvestites".

If that were not humiliating enough, almost all the big stores have closed down their grottoes and laid off their Santas, claiming lack of demand.

Under an ancient Parisian by-law, it is forbidden to "appear in disguise on a public thor-

oughfare", except at officially approved carnival times. The law is being applied rigorously this year at the demand of the big stores - the same premises that have refused to hire Santas and instead have put in their place magicians or toy snappers.

The stores - Printemps, Galeries Lafayette and Samaritaine - have stalls on the pavement selling seasonal gifts. They resent their customers being harassed by street photographers, who work with accomplices dressed in fading red robes and ill-fitting beards. A newer law forbids street photographers from patrolling outside the stores. Instead of relying on this law alone, the police have been throwing both the new and old ("no disguises") chapters of the book at the Santa-and-snapper teams.

Michel and his colleague Bruno, who charge 50 francs (£5.50) a picture have paid out several instant fines of £100 to £150 a time. Michel says he has

Crash victim gets record £9m damages

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE

A STUDENT left almost completely paralysed by a car accident was yesterday awarded record damages of up to £9.25m at the High Court.

Martijn Biesheuvel, from the Netherlands, had been studying at university in Britain when he was injured in May 1994. Now aged 27, he has almost no use of any of his limbs. The money – more than twice the largest previous payout – will help pay for round-the-clock care and for "pain, suffering and loss of amenity".

Mr Biesheuvel, who now lives in Amsterdam, was one of four Bath University students who were on their way for a game of football when they crashed into the rear of parked cars. Mr Biesheuvel was sitting in the back seat but was not wearing a seat-belt.

The driver, Andrew Birrell, later pleaded guilty to dangerous driving. His motor insurers admitted primary liability but disputed the amount of damages that had been claimed.

At the High Court yesterday, Richard Davies QC, for Mr Birrell, argued that Mr Biesheuvel had been partly to blame because he should have re-

alised that Mr Birrell was driving in a dangerous manner. "He allowed himself to be driven and continue to be driven by Mr Birrell when he knew or ought reasonably to have known that he ... was driving at an excessive speed and/or carelessly and dangerously."

But the judge, Mr Justice Eady, rejected the claim and said he was satisfied that the impact which caused Mr Biesheuvel's injuries had started with an upward movement. After hearing from an expert, the judge said it did not seem to be seriously contended that a seat-belt would have made any difference.

The court heard that prior to the accident Mr Biesheuvel had been due to take up a job with the City accountants Deloitte and Touche. Ken Chalk, a senior partner in the firm, said Mr Biesheuvel could have been earning £50,000 a year had the accident not wrecked his career.

Mr Biesheuvel's girlfriend, Marleka Godding, 25, broke down last month as she told the court of constant care her boyfriend needs. "There are so

many things during the day he needs help with. For instance if he drops something on the floor he can't pick it up," she said. "It is not nice to say but it is like leaving a four-year-old child on his own. It is a danger and anything could happen."

The judge granted leave to appeal on the issues of liability and amount – which will be decided precisely after further discussions between lawyers. The court was told the award will be between £2m and £2.5m.

The previous highest damages award, in November, was to Helen Edwards, now 17, who was left brain-damaged, blind, and unable to feed or talk after she had a heart attack during an operation to remove a birthmark from her forehead. She received more than £4m.

■ A child who suffered brain damage after being given blood of the wrong type during a transfusion was yesterday awarded £2.4m damages. James Green suffered convulsions and heart failure after the "mismatch" at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, Harlow, Essex. The blood was intended for another patient with the same name.



Martijn Biesheuvel, whose life was wrecked by the car crash injuries he suffered four years ago Photopress

Nasa loses control of probe

BY STEVE CONNOR
Science Editor

SCIENTISTS HAVE lost contact with a £138m space probe designed to rendezvous with an asteroid the size of central London in January.

The American National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) is attempting to regain control of the Near spacecraft, currently more than 200m miles from Earth, by sending a series of command signals once every three hours.

Helen Worth, a spokeswoman for the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory in Laurel, Maryland, said: "We're still optimistic. We just have to find an avenue of communication."

The Near probe was launched in 1996 and has travelled about 1.5 billion miles on its indirect route to the Eros asteroid, which is currently about 240m miles from Earth.

Nasa lost contact early yesterday morning after attempting to fire the spacecraft's rocket engines as part of the first stage in the sequence of rendezvous manoeuvres.

Near was scheduled to orbit the Eros asteroid for 12 months, mapping its magnetic and gravitational fields and analysing its mineral composition. Scientists had hoped to bring it within feet of its surface, even perhaps to attempt a soft landing.

Workers frown on substance abuse

BY BARRE CLEMENT
Labour Editor

WORKERS ARE increasingly unwilling to put up with colleagues who drink during working hours and far more likely to inform on them than they used to be, according to a new study.

Intolerance of "substance abuse" ranges from people who have serious drink and drugs problems to those who pop out to the pub at lunch time, says a survey conducted for the Institute of Personnel and Development.

"Ten years ago many people used to go out for a liquid lunch, but it is no longer as acceptable as it was," said Oonagh Ryden, a policy adviser at the institute.

Ms Ryden believes the growing tendency to tell management about colleagues' drinking or drug taking is based on anxiety over people's welfare and concern over the impact of such substances on work performance.

The survey of 1,800 company personnel specialists found that some 46 per cent of companies had received reports of alcohol abuse by staff during the last year, compared with 35 per cent in 1996 – an increase

of 11 per cent. Around 18 per cent of firms had received reports of illegal drug taking – an increase of 3 per cent.

Despite the trend, many companies had no policies on drugs or alcohol. Nearly 40 per cent of respondents said their organisations had no alcohol policy and nearly half did not have a drugs policy.

Programmes on alcohol and drug awareness for staff were even rarer, according to the study. Only 17 per cent reported such an initiative towards alcohol and just 15 per cent towards drugs.

More than eight out of 10 personnel officers said that managers and supervisors in their companies were not trained to recognise substance abuse.

Ms Ryden said employers had a duty to maintain health and safety at work and could not afford to be complacent.

IN BRIEF

Man charged with four rapes

A MAN accused of rape and other sex attacks against women across South-east England yesterday appeared before Horseshoe Road magistrates' court in London on 21 charges. Richard Baker, 34, originally from Bodmin, Cornwall, is charged with five indecent assaults, four rapes and one attempted rape. He is also charged with nine threats to kill and two counts of actual bodily harm.

Nobel Prize biologist dies at 84

THE NOBEL Prize winner Professor Sir Alan Hodgkin, one of Britain's most distinguished biologists, has died aged 84. Sir Alan, who died at his Cambridge home after a long illness, won the Nobel Prize for medicine in 1963 along with Professor Andrew Huxley and Sir John Eccles. They discovered how nerve cells transmit electrical impulses from the skin to the brain and back again.

Arrest in child murder inquiry

NORFOLK POLICE re-arrested a man yesterday on suspicion of murdering Thomas Marshall, aged 12, whose body was found in August last year in a lay-by near Thetford, 50 miles from his home in Happisburgh, Norfolk. The suspect, aged 51, was originally arrested on 15 September this year, and released without charge.

Success for kidney donor, 77

A 77-YEAR-OLD great grandfather was passed fit yesterday after becoming Britain's oldest live organ donor. Medical check-ups on Doug Gibson, from Buckinghamshire, and his son, also Doug, 51, from Rossendale, Lancashire, confirmed that both men's kidneys are working well after the donor operation two months ago.

Supermarket trolley seats four

SAINSBURY'S is testing an estate-style trolley which can carry four children and a load of shopping. Two children, aged two to eight, can sit on comfortable, bright blue seats attached to the back of the trolley while babies sit at the front. The trolley is being trialled at stores at Watford, Dom Roundabout and Coreys Mill, Stevenage, Herts.

DAVID AARONOVITCH



I do not care to be the agent of death among the deprived tots of Basra

IN THE TUESDAY REVIEW PAGE 3

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A drama a day keeps Branson's hot air publicity machine aloft round the world

BY PAUL McCANN
Media Editor

ANY OTHER self-publicist would have given up. With a Gulf war raging and the first impeachment of a President since 1868, balloons looking for headlines might have thought it worth waiting until a slightly quieter week – perhaps the time a UFO kidnaps Prince Harry.

But that would be to underestimate the power of the Richard Branson publicity machine.

Since the first brave assertions that his bid to circumnavigate the globe in a balloon would not be put off by the little matter of cruise missiles on his route, Britain's most popular entrepreneur has managed to provide a drama and more importantly, a story every day.

Libya was the first to oblige. It is only the first country a global balloonist hits when heading west from Morocco, but somehow permission to fly over it had not been secured until a "dramatic" last-minute message from Branson personally to Colonel Gaddafi.

At take-off, accompanied by 400 hired nomads, and almost as many journalists at the Marrakesh "news centre", a few small holes appeared in the fabric of the balloon, allowing a few small stories to appear.



Richard Branson is seen off on his latest adventure by his wife and daughter, left, flying over the Himalayas, centre, on a journey that sees him dodge a war and two no-fly zones ... so far

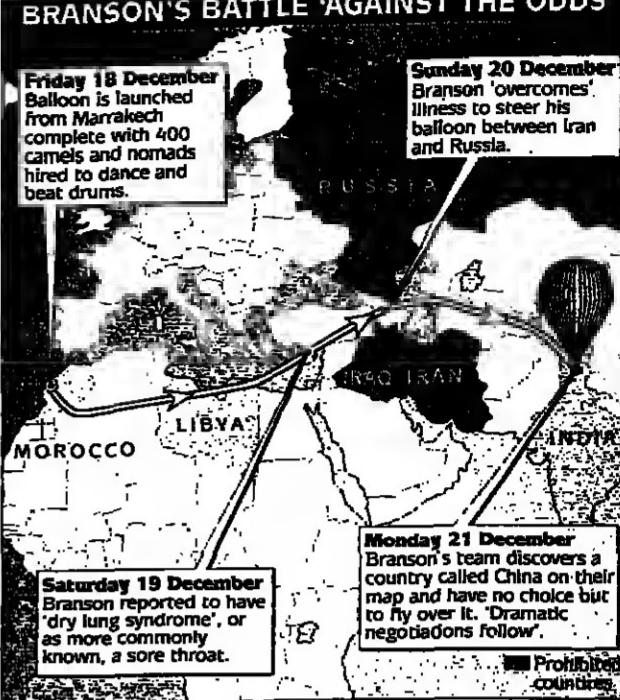


But miraculously the ailing millionaire recovers enough by the next day to take the helm of the balloon for the most thrilling part of the journey so far. Like Biggles cloned with Scott of the Antarctic, Branson now steers his balloon between not one but two "no fly zones". Ducking and weaving like only

a 272ft balloon can, he avoids Georgia and Iran.

Without a trace of irony Mike Kendrick, the project director, declares on Sunday that there had been "an average of 2.6 crises a day" since the balloon launched. "It has been a difficult flight so far but we are settling down a bit now."

The publicity operation that is taking Branson around the world is led by his Virgin Group publicity guru, Jackie McQuillan. With Will Whitehorn, his long-time adviser, also at his side, Branson and Virgin have some of the most skilled publicity people in the business. For a long time the group eschewed



Richard Branson's route across North Africa and into Russia.

an advertising agency, preferring to generate free column inches and television coverage themselves.

The publicity team is helped by public interest in Branson himself. "People are interested in him," says an insider who once worked in publicity for the Virgin empire. "But they have

actually been trying to tone it down recently.

"The balloon doesn't have Virgin written on the side and he's given up wearing wedding dresses and other stupid stunts. There was a time when Richard would show up to the opening of an envelope if he thought he'd get a headline."

Virgin's 148 days of 'no rail service'

BY PHILIP THORNTON
Transport Correspondent

affected by extremely poor weather, such as flooding in Scotland last Christmas and in the Midlands at Easter.

The extent of delays and hold-ups on sections of its empire was so severe on these days that Virgin declared them "void" – which means they do not count in government performance tables. The tables are used to determine whether season-ticket holders are entitled to discounts because of poor service.

In exchange for this opt-out, the train company has to give monthly season-ticket holders a day's extension or arrange similar compensation. But regulators are concerned the void-day rule means the performance tables do not give a proper guide to service levels.

Figures published by the Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions showed that Virgin declared 148 days "void" over the 12 months to November 14.

Its flagship West Coast main line from London to Glasgow contributed 120 of these days – 36 on its West Midlands routes, 37 on its North West Group and 47 for Scotland. Its Cross-Country network of InterCity services, which do not go via London, declared 28 days void.

Virgin said it had been af-

fected by extremely poor weather, such as flooding in Scotland last Christmas and in the Midlands at Easter.

Across the rail network a total of 343 days were declared void. Other "voiders" included Central Trains with 48 days, Silverlink, the north London and Home Counties commuter service, with 39, and Great Western Trains with 27.

The Transport minister Glenda Jackson said the Office of Passenger Rail Franchising (Oprf) would include the number of void days in its next quarterly bulletin of train performance, due in February. The last bulletin showed reliability and punctuality fell below levels achieved by British Rail.

They showed Virgin triggered discounts on three route groups. More than a quarter of West Coast Scottish trains were late, while more than 15 per cent of West Coast North West and Virgin CrossCountry were late. These did not include void days. Monthly figures published tomorrow are expected to show an improvement.

Virgin produced its passenger charter this month, which offers vouchers worth 25 per cent of the ticket price for passengers delayed an hour, and the full price for those delayed by two hours.

£5m secret of a baronet vicar

A BARONET vicar who lived on a council estate and drove a battered old van has left more than £5m in his will.

The Reverend Sir James Roll presided over the rundown parish of St John's Church in Dagenham, Essex, from 1959 to 1983. He kept his largely self-made fortune a secret until after he died in February this year, aged 87. It was accumulated by investment rather than being inherited with the title. Its size was only disclosed when his will was published this month.

Lynn Foster, a friend and former St John's church warden, said: "I thought we would have to raise money for his funeral, so I was stunned to hear of how much he left. I knew he had some money but he invested it heavily in insurance schemes and that must have been his secret."

Other colleagues remember a kind man whose only close companion was a terrier called Lucy. "He was the archetypal scruffy old vicar, with a heart of gold," said the Rev Roger Gayler, of the

neighbouring St Mark's Church. "His dog-collar didn't fit, his mac had certainly seen better days, he drove a battered old van and lived in an ordinary house on a council estate which was owned by the Water Board."

Sir James left £200,000 to a variety of animal, homeless and children's charities, but the bulk of his fortune went to his step-sister and other distant relatives. He also left £10,000 to St Clement's Church, Leigh-on-Sea, where he had a home to which he took poor children on holiday.

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Natural History Museum

Protocetus, an 'archaeocete' descendant of the newly found Himalayan whale

Mother's murder: man is charged

BY JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

A MAN WAS charged yesterday with the murder of Sharon Lester, whose two-year-old daughter was found dead on Sunday night, left in a rubbish bag on wasteland.

Ms Lester, 22, was found at her home in Kensington, Liverpool, on Saturday. She had been beaten and repeatedly stabbed. Her daughter, Jade, was discovered close to a reservoir.

John Park, 24, spoke yesterday only to confirm his name during a four-minute hearing before magistrates in Liverpool. An unemployed joiner of Kensington, Liverpool, he is charged with murdering Ms Lester between 12 and 19 December.

He is also accused of burgling her home in Ling Street, Liverpool, on 19 December and stealing property.

Mr Park, wearing a grey sweatshirt and tracksuit bottoms, was remanded into police custody. He will reappear in court later this week. There was no application for bail by the defence solicitor, Gerry Bowen, and reporting restrictions were not lifted.

A nationwide hunt was



Sharon Lester had been beaten and stabbed

launched for Jade after her mother's body was found in a recess under stairs in the back dining room of her terraced house on Saturday.

Detective Superintendent Russ Walsh told a press conference yesterday that Ms Lester was a devoted mother.

"She was extremely devoted and Jade was a well-cared-for child and well-loved. The family themselves are absolutely devastated."

He said they had still been unable to trace Jade's father. "Unfortunately, Sharon did not divulge the name of the father to her family. We are having great difficulty in tracking the father down."

If the father is aware of what's happened then we would like him to contact us. It's quite important to the investigation that we trace him."

Mr Walsh said Jade was found by a team of officers including two women constables on waste ground near a reservoir. Her fully clothed body was found in a bin bag, which had been tied with string and left in an overgrown grassy area, where it was hidden from view.

Police heading the investigation said that they had traced two men seen in a white van close to the house in Ling Road and had ruled them out of the inquiry. They both came forward and have been eliminated in terms of involvement in the offence."

A second man, seen in a yellow van, still has not been traced, he added.

Police are still awaiting the results of a post-mortem examination to discover exactly how Jade died. So far no one has been questioned about her death.

New test detects cancer earlier

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

A TEST for cervical cancer that can detect changes in the cells at an earlier stage than existing methods and could reduce misdiagnoses has been developed by scientists.

The system, which uses infra-red light to analyse the chemical composition of cells, can spot those in the earliest stage of becoming cancerous before the changes are visible under the microscope.

The discovery, by US researchers from Rockefeller University in New York, and the biotech company Digital, Cambridge, Massachusetts, is the third advance reported in the past 10 days which, it is claimed, could improve the accuracy of screening.

World's oldest whale is found in the Himalayas

BY STEVE CONNOR
Science Editor

the University of Roorkee, in northern India.

In a paper published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, the scientists say the fossil is a significant find because of both its extreme age and because it was found in a layer of sediments clearly associated with marine animals rather than freshwater species.

H. subathuensis is considerably older than a more recent whale ancestor, *Pakicetus*, which has also been linked with the ancient Tethys Sea separating Asia and the Indian subcontinent before they collided to form the Himalayan mountains.

Pakicetus is believed to have been the ancestor of the first truly ancient whale, *Archaeocetus*, a fish-eater that grew to about the size of a modern porpoise and lived more than 35 million years ago.

"When first described, *Pakicetus* was interpreted as an amphibious initial stage of whale evolution that rested and reproduced on land and entered Tethys opportunistically to feed on fish," the scientists say.

The latest fossil jawbone was recovered from a sedimentary layer 100 metres deeper than previous *Pakicetus* finds.

Bajpai and Gingerich

say, "This not only extends the fossil record of *Cetacea* [the whale family] back in time, but also reinforces the idea that whales originated on the margin of Tethys and corroborates interpretation of *Pakicetus* as an initial amphibious stage of cetacean evolution entering Tethys to feed on fish."

The chemical composition of other early whale fossils showed evidence of life in freshwater rather than sea environments.

Analysis of phosphate in the newly discovered fossil teeth revealed values half way between those associated with freshwater and sea-living species, the scientists report.

"*Himalayacetus* came from a shallow, oyster-bearing marine deposit, whereas *Pakicetus* and the other oldest pakicetids known previously came from continental red beds and were found in association with land mammals," they say.

Although modern whales have lost their hind legs, their earlier ancestors evidently had functional limbs that allowed them to roam around on land.

Archaeocetus had two vestigial hind legs that protruded from its body but which seemed to serve little or no function.

Further adaptations allowed modern whales to exploit the rich ocean environment to become, in the case of the blue whale, the largest animal on Earth.

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Why I'm battling against the euro, by Lord Owen

BY ANDREW GRICE
Political Editor

THE MAN dubbed "Dr Death" will spring back into political life early in the new year. Lord Owen will launch a group that will be pro-European but opposed to early British entry into the single currency.

The former Labour foreign secretary and leader of the now defunct Social Democratic Party (SDP), who today speaks rarely about domestic politics, told *The Independent* he felt it was "sympathy" with Tony Blair's Government.

"I see New Labour as a vindication of most of what the SDP did," he said. "I am very pleased with what has happened."

Lord Owen was loathed by Labour critics who believed he should fight his corner rather than found the SDP and renamed him Dr Death for the damage they claimed he was doing to the party - and he remains a hate figure to them.

But he insists that the breakaway party had "a very important influence" in forcing Labour to modernise. "Labour had the shock of its life in 1983,

when it saw those SDP posters on its council estates," he said.

He revealed that he now met Mr Blair "from time to time", but would not elaborate.

"I think Blair is doing very well, though it's early days. In personal terms, he has done well

on Northern Ireland. He is right to make education a priority."



Lord Owen, renamed 'Dr Death' by his Labour critics, sees New Labour as a vindication of the breakaway SDP, which he led from 1983 to 1987. John Vass

Other members of his group include Lord Prior, the former Tory cabinet minister, now chairman of GEC, and Martin Taylor, who has just stood down as chief executive of Barclays Bank.

Lord Owen promised that

there would be people "from all walks of life, whose hallmark is a lifetime of commitment to the European Union. We are serious Europeans who are worried about any rapid movement to a single currency." He insisted: "It will not be a group of old staggers and old tarts. We will involve the younger generation."

Despite growing specula-

tion that Mr Blair will arrange a poll shortly after the next general election, Lord Owen said: "It is perfectly possible we will never have a referendum. I don't deny that maybe [Mr Blair's] inclination would be to go in if he saw a window of opportunity in the opinion polls. But I think we could mount a very effective referendum

Nor would membership

campaign, even if we started behind in the polls.

What is at issue is the self-confidence of Britain as a self-governing nation. The disadvantages are clear. You are in a straitjacket. You cannot change your exchange rate or interest rates."

Lord Owen insisted that

Britain could still play an important role in the EU while remaining outside the euro. "We might have to be taken more seriously than if we just become absorbed by the 12 joining members."

He will not say that Britain

should never join the euro. "There may be circumstances where you might see substantial economic advantages, but you would have to be sure that the EU would not become a United States of Europe. That battle has to be fought for the next five to ten years. If

people think EMU [economic and monetary union] is part of a downward escalator to a United States of Europe, they will be very against it."

"But I don't think we should be hostile to EMU. I have no time for those who will rejoice every time it runs into trouble."

However, he did rejoice a little at two recent events: the Franco-German demands for the single currency to be accompanied by a common EU tax policy, and the lack of EU support for the British and United States bombing of Iraq. For Lord Owen, the latter was

a "classic example" of how majority voting in EU foreign policy would never work, since Britain under such a system could not have acted alone.

"Tony Blair tried to persuade the other EU countries to support him, but they failed him," he said.

Lord Owen believes that

his latest - and possibly last - crusade will triumph, but conceded: "At the end of the day, if the younger generation decide they want the single currency, we will have to go for it the whole hog. But I will regret it to my dying day."

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Quintessence (kwintissens) n. late ME. [- Fr. *quintessence*, *quinte essence* - med. L. *quintus*, fifth + *essentia*, essence] 1. The 'fifth essence' of ancient and medieval philosophy, the substance of which the heavenly bodies were composed. 2. The finest part of any substance; a highly refined essence. 3. Chemistry, an alcoholic tincture obtained by distillation. 4. a. In perfumery, the purest or most perfect form or manifestation. b. Consummate; of the highest quality. Model of excellence, superlative. c. Impeccable; Not liable to fault. d. Sublime; exalted, surpassing. e. The top dog; the most refined of its kind.

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Ministers 'putting arms before human rights'

BY FRAN ABRAMS
Westminster Correspondent

MINISTERS HAVE soft-pedalled on human rights abuses abroad to avoid losing lucrative trade deals including arms sales, a House of Commons committee suggested yesterday.

Members of the Foreign Affairs Select Committee were critical of Britain's attitude to Indonesia, where the UK has struck important arms deals, and China, to which Tony Blair led a trade mission this year. They said that while some departments, such as the Foreign Office, were clearly worried about human rights, those responsible for trade seemed less concerned. Launching their report on foreign policy and human rights, MPs from all parties said Britain's attitude towards the former Suharto regime in Indonesia had been softened by its desire to sell arms.

The committee's chairman, Donald Anderson, criticised a



The criticised picture of Cook and Suharto Popperfoto

picture in the Government's annual human rights report of Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, shaking hands with President Suharto, who returned amid mounting unrest in May. "The temptation is to be strong on weak countries and weak on strong countries. Indonesia was clearly a country where there were substantial projects including arms purchases in prospect," he said.

Trade and Industry and even possibly 10 Downing Street, Britain's "constructive engagement" in Indonesia contrasted with its tough stance against the Abacha regime in Nigeria, also now defunct, the committee said.

The report said some progress had been made and committee members added that their conclusions, made 18 months into the new administration, must be tentative. However, there was certainly inconsistency in the way the "ethical" dimension to foreign policy operated. The report criticised the Government for not taking a stronger line against China, saying the Chinese government had claimed a "propaganda victory" after the EU failed to censure it.

A Foreign Office spokesman welcomed the positive aspects of the report: "It does praise his [Robin Cook's] work on the EU arms code, the International Criminal Court and the human rights annual report."

Mandelson jobs promise 'false'

BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

THE UNEMPLOYED are being misled by Peter Mandelson with the promise of thousands of jobs that do not exist, the Opposition said yesterday.

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry had "fiddled" the figures because only 108 out of 2,040 "new" jobs quoted by him were actual vacancies.

The Government denied the allegations and in turn accused the shadow Trade and Industry spokesman, John Redwood, of indulging in "silly scare stories".

The controversy centred on Mr Mandelson's recent claim that the North-east could weather large-scale redundancies caused by the closure of Siemens and Fujitsu plants because more jobs were being created by other firms. He said

the region had generated more vacancies than redundancies and added: "I want people to go out and talk up the region. I don't want people talking us into it."

The Department of Trade and Industry said 2,000 posts had been created by a Barclays call centre in Sunderland, and Alloy Processing in Newton Aycliffe was offering 40 jobs.

But Barclays will have 100 jobs by the end of this month, while the steel company will have eight. Mr Redwood said Mr Mandelson had been "fiddling the figures to give the impression that more jobs were being created than lost."

Battle heats up on Welsh Assembly

BY PAUL WAUGH
Political Correspondent

THE BATTLE for the Labour leadership of the Welsh Assembly took a new twist yesterday when the Welsh Secretary, Alun Michael, was accused of running scared of the voters.

He was attacked by supporters of his rival, Rhodri Morgan, after saying he would not contest one of the 40 constituency seats for the assembly in May. Instead, he wanted to be one of 20 assembly members elected from regional "top-up" party lists by proportional representation. He will stand in Mid and West Wales, made up of eight individual constituencies, none of which has backed him in the leadership contest.

He said he had been invited for selection in half a dozen safe

seats that each has a candidate but he did not want to be seen pushing aside local party members. "Because assembly members elected through the list will carry out duties in each of the eight constituencies in the area, I will, as an additional member, be able to focus on its strategic needs."

The result of the leadership ballot is due in February.

Mr Morgan, the Cardiff West MP, has been selected to fight the Cardiff West seat for the assembly. His supporters said Mr Michael's decision proved his unpopularity with local Labour members. "He's running scared from the voters."

AWAR IBRAHIM

In solitary confinement the sound of silence is quite deafening

THE TUESDAY RUMINATIONS

It's a bit like being in a dark room with a bright light on. You can't see anything but the light itself.

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Lucille McLauchlan, tight-lipped, leaving Dundee Sheriff Court yesterday

Fotopress Dundee

Saudi nurse stole cash from patient

BY ANDY DENHOLM

A NURSE jailed in Saudi Arabia over the murder of a colleague was found guilty yesterday of stealing from a patient in Britain.

Lucille McLauchlan, 33, took money from an elderly patient while at King's Cross Hospital, Dundee, in 1996, and then forged references to get work. She was also convicted of reset - handling a stolen bank card.

The court appearance followed the nurse's release from Saudi Arabia earlier this year. She spent 17 months in jail after being convicted of being an accessory to murder.

Sheriff Alastair Stewart, at Dundee Sheriff Court, deferred sentence until 18 January for reports.

Although she was found guilty of using the bank card, McLauchlan was acquitted of stealing it while working at

something else such as making a balance inquiry but I suggest that is the sort of fanciful speculation that juries are directed to avoid."

The sheriff described McLauchlan's use of forged references, which she gave to the Speedwell Nurses Recruitment Agency, Dundee, as "a clearly thought out and planned pattern of deceit with a view to obtaining employment abroad". He said they contained "untrue statements" and "complete lies".

McLauchlan - who appeared under her married name of Ferrie - sat impassively in the dock as the verdicts were read out and refused to speak to reporters as she left the court.

One of the references purporting to come from Loraine Deuchars of King's Cross Hospital spoke of McLauchlan's "good working relationship

with staff" and described her as "very popular" with patients and relatives. But Miss Deuchars told the court she had not seen the letter.

McLauchlan was suspended by King's Cross Hospital in April 1996 after a police investigation into the missing bank card and she was sacked after a hearing on 14 May.

By that time she had approached the agency, asking about work abroad. Soon after she got a job at the King Fahd military hospital in Saudi Arabia. While there, McLauchlan was jailed with Deborah Parry, another nurse, after the death of Yvonne Gilford, an Australian, in 1995.

A Saudi court convicted her of being an accessory to murder and sentenced her to eight years in prison and 500 lashes. She flew home after her sentence was commuted in May.

Seasonal ways to steal cars

MOTORING ORGANISATIONS have identified three new types of car thief who have sprung up in response to the latest attempts by manufacturers and police forces to improve vehicle security.

These new techniques - known as "frosting", "hooking" and "gifting" - take advantage of drivers' complacency that their cars are theft-proof. Thieves are selecting high-value luxury saloon cars such as Jaguars and Mercedes.

■ Frosting, which originated in the West Midlands, preys on motorists who leave their engines running while the car defrosts and nip into the house for a cup of tea. The thief sneaks into the car and drives off with an early Christmas present.

■ Hooking is when car thieves push long metal hooks through letterboxes to prise away keys left hanging near the front door.

■ Gifting is a seasonal crime.

BY PHILIP THORNTON
Transport Correspondent

Many Christmas shoppers return to their cars halfway through the trip and leave parcels visible on the back seat or on the hatchback shelf.

The RAC said these crimes had emerged since local councils and business started making greater use of close circuit television (CCTV) in high crime areas. Last year thieves pried on garage forecourts as many drivers left their keys in the car while paying for petrol, but this had been made more difficult by CCTV.

Edmund King, RAC director of campaigns, said: "Security improvements, alarms and improved immobilisers have made it much harder for the car thief to break into and steal luxury cars."

He said simple measures, such as concealing car keys and not leaving car doors open or their contents visible, would prevent the problem.

ANWAR IBRAHIM



In solitary confinement,
the sound of silence
is quite deafening

IN THE TUESDAY REVIEW PAGE 4

Have you bought
a Pay as you talk
phone? Well, here are
some Christmas wishes
from Vodafone

Due to the incredible popularity of Pay as you Talk, our Helpline service has been very busy and there may be a delay in answering your call. Our busiest days will probably be Christmas Day and Boxing Day, and if you can't get through we would like to apologise for any inconvenience that this may cause. Don't forget our Helpline is open 24hrs a day.

To help us help you further, if you have bought a digital handset, you no longer need to phone the Creditline to check your Calling or Service Credit. Simply dial *#1345# followed by the SEND key or press the Hotkey. After a few moments your balance will be displayed on the screen of your phone. This service is free, of course.

We would also like to encourage you to register your details by post by filling in the card in the box. To give you more time, we have extended the return date for registrations for our Pay as you Talk Christmas promotion. So if you have used your phone by December 31st 1998 and we receive your card by January 14th 1999, you will still qualify for the normal £2.50 worth of Calling Credit and the £10 special Christmas offer! Our final wish is that you enjoy Christmas and using your phone.



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All offers quoted are inclusive of VAT. Daily contract of £1.60 of calling credit.

Illinois wrestler chosen to 'heal'

BY MARY DEJEVSKY
in Washington

The YEAR of the wrestler is nigh. Before the weekend Dennis Hastert, a Republican Representative for Illinois for the past 12 years, was one of a crowd of almost anonymous mid-Western conservatives who worked in the backrooms and quietly cast his vote with the party. Now, "Denny" Hastert follows the governor-elect of Minnesota, Jesse Ventura, into the national spotlight as the latest of the wrestling fraternity to find fame.

The former college wrestling coach, small-town schoolteacher and one-time farm-boy is on the brink of becoming Speaker of the House of Representatives, heir to the gavel of Newt Gingrich and the third in the hierarchy of the American Constitution. If President Clinton were to leave office (which he swears he will not) and something untoward happened to Al Gore, the House Speaker is next in line.

It is to Mr Hastert, 56, that senior Republicans have turned in their hour of need. His was the name canvassed after the Speaker-elect, Bob Livingston, resigned in specula-



NEWT GINGRICH

Got the big elbow from the voters at the mid-term elections, just when he thought his moment had come. In any case, he was not really in a position to throw stones labelled "family values" at Clinton...



BOB LIVINGSTON

...which meant the Republican baton was handed to the eloquent and urbane Bob Livingston. But Mr Livingston's philandering caught up with him, just as he stepped out of the shadows...



DENNIS HASTERT

...so the time of the farm boy is here. Dennis Hastert, who was also once a wrestling coach and a schoolteacher, is now about to inherit the Speaker's gavel. But the talk now is: he may be moral, but is he his own man?

People show that they are feeling Clinton's pain

NOTHING THAT President Clinton has ever said produced more groans of cynicism nationwide than his "I feel your pain" declaration back in 1992. A politician pretending to feel empathy for Everyone? Tell us another one.

And yet here we are, two days after Mr Clinton's im-

peachment, and voters are returning him the favour. They, in vast numbers, are feeling his pain.

As Michael Kinsley, the editor of the online *Slate* magazine writes in this week's *Time*, that

the real story of this extraordinary year in American politics has not been that the President has his way with a 21-year-old intern in the Oval Office, or that he became the first American leader in 130 years to be punished with impeachment.

The big revelation has been

the reaction of the people. They did not turn against him. "Rarely," writes Kinsley, "has such a clear consensus been so unexpected". Unexpected by whom? By the Republicans, one assumes, who ploughed on with impeachment even as the poll numbers showed disapproval with their zeal all through the summer and autumn and

who now face the risk of a long-term public backlash.

And unexpected also, perhaps, by the pundits and opinion-peddlers of Washington who have been accused of being blind to opinion beyond the confines of the capital.

That is not to say that public opinion is not having its impact today. Indeed, the polls are all that are saving President Clinton. He can afford to resist the notion of resigning because of the polls. If more than 50 per cent of voters favoured him resigning he would have to think more carefully.

How though, can we explain this loyalty? The easiest answer lies with the health of the economy. Americans, according to some, are simply too comfortable in this era of unbroken prosperity to worry about the

morals of the leader who has delivered it to them.

But there are other things about this scandal that many voters find far more distressing than what Clinton did. Kenneth Starr, for example, has earned opprobrium from all but the most hard-core of Clinton haters. Voters were offended, above all, by the lurid details he chose to put in the report he sent to Congress - the semen on the dress, the thong underwear and that cigar. As for Linda Tripp, the tapes of her conversations with Monica Lewinsky condemn her many times over out of her own mouth as sickeningly manipulative.

And voters hate the partisanship that became most apparent in the votes taken on Saturday. The Republicans huff and puff that they are motivat-

ed more than a surrogate for Mr DeLay - a fundamentalist former pest-control officer from Texas, nicknamed "the hammer". Mr Hastert's supporters are hopeful that he will be his own man, but also - word much heard in Washington in

recent weeks - a "healer". And his first words to reporters were about "reconciliation" and reaching across party lines. If, as seems certain, he is elected next month, the fractious post-impeachment mood of the House will be his first challenge.

peachment effort represents. This, after all, is a scandal about the personal failings of a human being.

What wonderful irony there is here. The Republicans are meant to stand for keeping the government out of the day-to-day living of Americans. Low taxes, minimum regulations, gun ownership and so forth. And yet here they are, tearing open the private life of the President and using what they find to try to force him out of office.

At bottom, however, it may be that American society has simply moved on. There is perhaps a new tolerance out there. An understanding that humans are not perfect and that it is pointless to believe that any human can be so, not even the President of the United States.

Ford and Carter seek fast solution

THESE ARE edited excerpts from an article in yesterday's *New York Times* co-written by former presidents Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter.

We are convinced that the public good requires a prompt and fair resolution on the impeachment issue. Fortunately, Senate procedures ... provide the means to end this national ordeal in ways that can uphold the rule of law without permanently damaging the Presidency ...

In addition to immediate dismissal of the charges against President Clinton, there are four alternatives for the Senate to weigh: a trial followed by acquittal; a trial followed by conviction and removal from office; a trial followed by censure; or censure without a trial ...

Impeachment has already brought disgrace to President Clinton. Whatever happens in the near future will do little to affect history's judgement of him. But he is not alone before the bar of judgement. Our political system, too, is on trial.

We personally favour a bipartisan resolution of censure by the Senate. Under such a plan, President Clinton would have to accept rebuke while acknowledging his wrongdoing and the very real harm he has caused. Clearly, the American people expect and desire an outcome that is firm, fair and untainted by partisan advantage. That is the challenge before us. How we meet that challenge will go a long way toward healing our divided nation.

'The greatest work of fiction since vows of fidelity were included in the French marriage service'

Edmund Blackadder



BLACK-ADDER
The Whole Damn Dynasty

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Anthony Blunt: Has put off his black



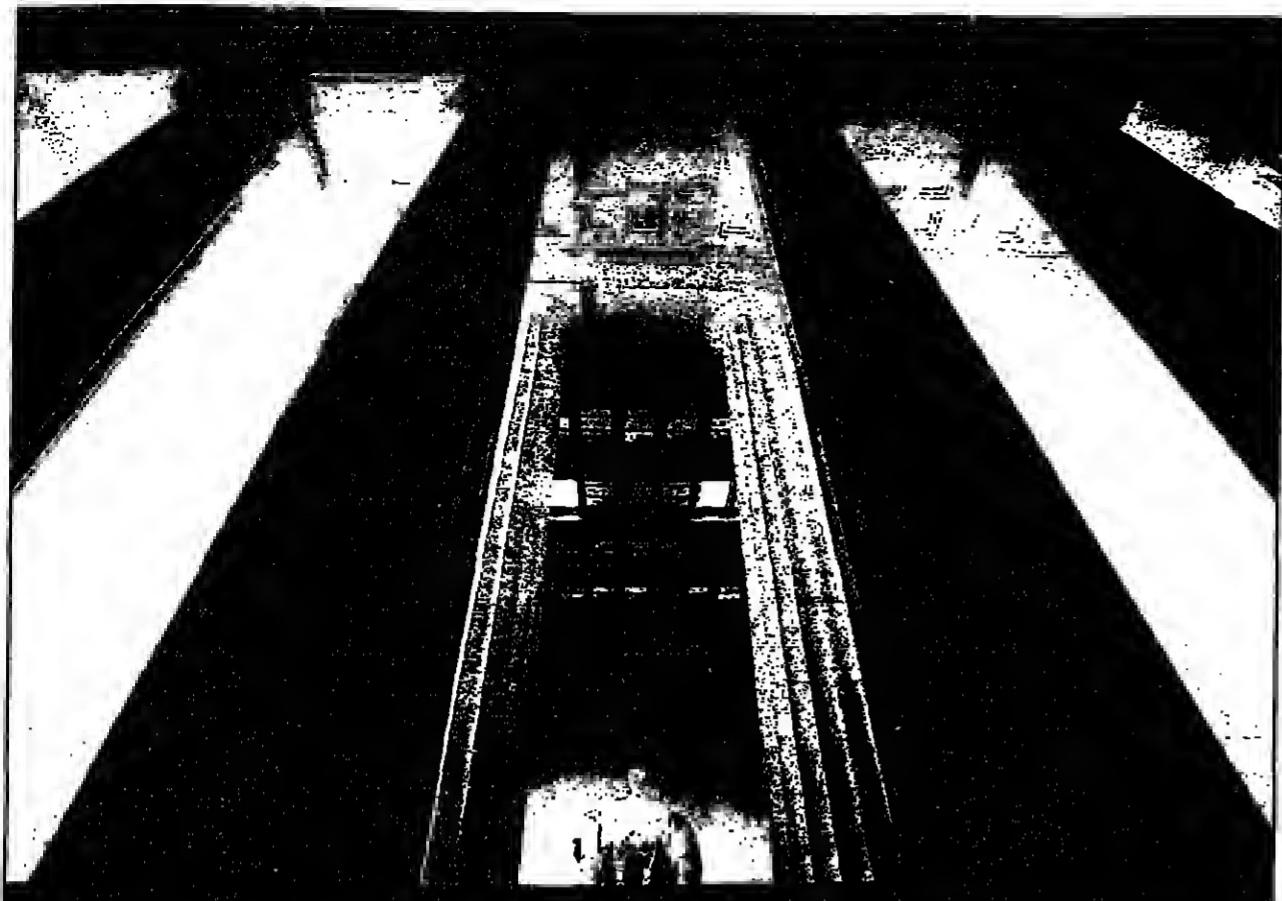
Anthony Blunt: Advised not to speak at election

He was a member of the Conservative Council, which was responsible for its financial management. When it was established in 1989, it had a large amount of its assets in the form of shares in the City of London Stock Exchange, which it continued to hold until 1992.

During the 1990s, most city companies were forced to sell off their shares in the stock exchange, so that the stock exchange collection could be used for the poor. The mayor of the City of London, Ken Livingstone, has condemned this as a "formidably

bad idea".

It is too late to change the world. Let the work for you to free!



The Lincoln Memorial waits in the wings as Washington waits for the Senate to fulfil its duty Brian Harris

DC reverses decline to win back home rule

BY MARY DEJEVSKY
in Washington

THERE WAS much seasonal rejoicing in Washington yesterday at the announcement that after three years of outside management, the capital of the United States, otherwise known as the District of Columbia, would be permitted to govern itself again. From January, when the new mayor, Anthony Williams, takes office, the elected council will take back responsibility for running the city.

In a symbolic gesture, the announcement of a return to what is known locally as "home rule" came not from the federally appointed Control Board, which is currently responsible for running the city, but from the office of the mayor.

Mr Williams said that he believed the changes would result in a cleaner, safer city within six months.

The decision to return the bulk of power to the mayor is a direct response to two developments: the reluctant acceptance of the present mayor, the controversial Marion Barry, that he should seek "friendly" advice not to seek re-election, and the voters' choice of Anthony Williams to succeed him. Mr Williams, an adopted child who was brought up in Los Angeles, has been Washington's chief accountant for the past two years and is credited with turning around the city's finances to the point where it will be in the black this year.

The fact that Mr Williams received well over 50 per cent of the vote made him the first mayor of this racially divided city to have a mandate from black and white voters alike. Mr Barry, who was re-elected in 1994 after resigning because of a drugs conviction two years before, had exacerbated the city's division, attracting – until they too started to find the mismanagement intolerable – the devoted support of the District's black majority and the fierce resentment of whites.

To the general amazement of residents, the improvement in the city's finances has been accompanied by belated manifestations of the economic boom that has benefited many other parts of the United States. The city centre is currently the scene of frenetic building and refurbishment, some, but by no means all, spawned by the MCI sports stadium, which opened a year ago.

Decaying sites, which were used as car parks, are being vacated by the day as builders move in with earth-moving equipment and huge cranes to start the construction of office blocks and hotels.

The boom is even helping suburbs inside the District border, where property values, which had been falling for almost a decade, are increasing, empty areas of land are sprouting new developments and smaller, older houses are being razed by their owners to make way for new homes.

Anthony Williams: Has put city back in the black



Marion Barry: Advised not to seek re-election

The city council was stripped of most of its financial authority in 1995 when it was on the verge of bankruptcy. In August 1997 it lost most of its administrative authority as well, after management and city services had continued to decline.

From next month, most city agencies, including those responsible for public works, social services, rubbish collection and health clinics for the poor, will report to the mayor, via the city manager, Camille Barnett.

Ms Barnett, a formidably

Last Christmas thousands of people wished they were dead.

"So here it is merry Christmas everybody's having fun, look to the future now, it's only just begun..."

Everytime you hear the immortal words of Slade's Noddy Holder, you know Christmas has officially started. Trouble is, now it seems to start in about June.

Not everybody will have a merry Christmas, not everybody's having fun, and not everybody's looking to the future.

Let's face it, even the first Christmas had its ups and downs. A family with no home, a new baby, and then a bunch of strangers turning up in the middle of the night.

We have so many expectations of what Christmas should be like, that feelings of grief, unhappiness or loneliness are much more acute and real.

Christmas is fundamentally about family – but what if

you don't have one, or this year someone in your family died. Only those who have experienced this know the pain of pretending your way through the festive season, the agony of not having to buy a present, nor send a card, or not set a dinner place.

For parents who have lost young children the void can be unbearable. Queueing for hours and hours amongst manic mothers to get your hands on this year's must-have toy is some people's sweetest dream.

Christmas is also the time to be with loved ones. Anyone who has been through a divorce knows the wrench

Uncharted waters ahead for Clinton

BY RUPERT CORNWELL

THE DISPUTATIOUS and bitterly partisan House of Representatives having fulfilled its constitutional duty, America's other and very different legislative chamber began to prepare the ground yesterday for its own decisive role in the impeachment of Bill Clinton.

If the House at great moments of crisis tends to resemble a student debating hall, the Senate is very much the upper common room: clubby, cloaked in traditions and above all imbued with a sense of its own self-importance.

"The greatest deliberative body on earth," it was once fond of calling itself, until an all-too-visible lack of deliberative skills turned the phrase into a parody. But the illusion persists. All 100 senators look into the mirror each morning and see a future president, it is said. Although nobody from its ranks has been elected to

Fireworks, not surprisingly, are rare. To be sure, great occasions always possess their drama, and so it will be in the impeachment trial. But the very arrangement of the furniture seems designed to extract the passion from the place. The senator has no bench but a desk-cum-lectern.

C-SPAN, the television channel that carries Senate proceedings in their entirety, must also keep its camera fixed on the speaker. Panning shots are barred – for the simple reason viewers would otherwise see that this temple of democracy is usually empty.

But if America's political temperature needs lowering, the Senate is the perfect forum. Its members face election only every six years, compared with every other year for Representatives. Even the fieriest recruit from the House, after a few attempts to liven things up,

soon hears the tut-tutting of his peers and acquires the proper decorum.

The Senate, moreover, could never pass anything as contentious as an article of impeachment as narrowly as the 221 to 212 vote that "indicted" Mr Clinton for obstruction of justice. It needs a 60 per cent majority, or 60 votes, even to end a filibuster. And no less than two-thirds, or 67 votes, are needed for an impeachment conviction, or to overturn a presidential veto.

On the face of things, therefore, Mr Clinton looks safe; even if all 55 Republicans voted unanimously, 12 Democrats would have to defect if he is to be driven from office. At any point they could stop the trial.

Senators, however, are less inclined to follow the party whip, and this is a process through uncharted waters.

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Peking jails democrat for 13 years

CHINESE JAIL terms were imposed yesterday on two Chinese dissidents, 11 weeks to the day since China signed the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

After a year in which visiting foreign leaders have spoken approvingly of China's tentative legal reforms, it took three-and-a-half hours for Xu Wenli, 5, a veteran activist, to be found guilty of subversion and sentenced to 13 years in prison. fellow dissident, Wang Youcui, 2, was jailed for 11 years on the same charges.

Mr Xu's wife, He Xintong, as the only family member or friend allowed at the closed-door trial in Peking.

She said Mr Xu responded to questions from his court-appointed lawyer but refused to answer questions from the judge, at one point saying: "This is a political persecution." Mr Xu and Mr Wang had been set up to set up a China Democracy Party.

After a judge said Mr Xu's refusal to answer questions was contempt, he retorted: "I have the right to keep silent."

BY TERESA POOLE
in Peking

The official verdict said that he had "secretly planned" to set up cells for the party and sought and accepted financial assistance from foreign hostile organisations". No details of the supposed evidence were reported. Mr Wang's trial was held on Thursday in Hangzhou city.

The severity of the sentences shocked Western diplomats, who have been saying dialogue with China over rights issues. The US embassy in Peking described the jail terms as "deplorable".

The trials are embarrassing many Western governments, which welcomed China's recent reforms to its rules on criminal procedure and have backed projects to train Chinese lawyers, judges and court officials in the hope of improving the country's flawed legal system.

To coincide with Mr Blair's visit, a British Law Week was held in Peking, including the staging of a mock trial, introduced by the Prime Minister's wife, Cherie Booth QC.

When it comes to punishing

mean such incidents as the detention of a dissident could be discussed "with the Chinese in a spirit of co-operation".

Yesterday the Foreign Office minister Derek Fatchett said he was shocked at the speed with which Mr Xu was tried and the severity of his sentence. Mr Fatchett was due last night to dine with Ma Zhengang, China's ambassador to Britain, a meeting at which he will have been able to test the "spirit of co-operation" for discussion of rights issues. The US embassy in Peking described the jail terms as "deplorable".

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When it comes to punishing



Activists with pictures of Mr Xu demonstrating outside government offices in Hong Kong yesterday AP

disidents, however, China does not meet even the limited rights provided to defendants under its own new rules.

Mr Xu, who has already spent 12 years in jail for pro-democracy activities, was told only on Friday that he was due in court yesterday.

He ought to have received 10 days' notice. His court-appointed lawyer thus had only the weekend to prepare a defence.

Mr Wang's chosen lawyer was detained and others frightened off, so he had to defend himself. The official Xinhua news agency said yesterday that both men had had "open trials conducted according to law".

Mr Xu will not appeal against his sentence, his wife said. To appeal, he said, would be admitting a crime. And under no circumstance is he willing to admit to this crime."

news agency said yesterday that both men had had "open trials conducted according to law".

Qin Yongmin, a China Democracy Party colleague whose trial for subversion was also on Thursday, had three days' notice of his court appearance, and could not find a lawyer in time. His sentence is expected soon.

Mr Xu will not appeal against his sentence, his wife said. To appeal, he said, would be admitting a crime. And under no circumstance is he willing to admit to this crime."

Ringing in the new, without those sprouts

STREET LIFE
SAMOTECHNY LANE, MOSCOW

"OK the halls with boughs of holly-la-la-la-la-la-la-la." I've just been to the Christmas tree market here in Samotchny Lane and come home with a fine fic.

"We had never heard of Christmas then," said Sasha. "Even our own Rozhdestvo was a low-key affair because the communists did not encourage the Orthodox church. But we always celebrated New Year with a bang. We had champagne and salad and watched With Light Steam and Blue Flame. If we were lucky, we would see some Western pop groups like Boney M."

Not much has changed. Blue Flame, a variety show best compared to the BBC's old Christmas Night With the Stars, has yielded to cooler pop music.

But year after year, when the champagne corks had popped, Russians settled down to enjoy With Light Steam, their favourite comedy about a man who gets drunk at the banya (steam bath) and ends up by mistake spending New Year in someone else's flat.

It is still too early to slump in front of the TV, however. This week Russians are doing their new year shopping. Housewives are stocking up on beetroot and walnuts, salmon, tinned peas and mayonnaise for their traditional salad. There was a panic some weeks ago when the authorities banned the sale of alcohol on street markets as too many people had been poisoned by polluted vodka. But state-run shops appear to be coping with the demand for champagne, at least in Moscow.

A Western Christian, I do not so lonely in Moscow this Christmas, for some Russians are beginning to celebrate what they call "Chreestmas", as well as their own holiday in early January.

In communist times, the Soviet Union used to be the perfect place for Scrooges to seek asylum from merriment. December 25 was just another ordinary working day. Catholics and Protestants in the occupied East states had to clock in at 10am and could only celebrate Christmas in secret at home.

Moscow, the fir tree market opened pointedly on the eve of the New Year, when Western Christmas was over I remember buying year making do with a bit of culinary bay leaves as twist of tinsel instead of asper tree. And you could get sprouts for love nor pay.

Now our Christmas traditions are becoming popular in at least with the Western middle classes. "We Russians like parties," said Svetlana, an accountant, who with her wife, Lena, for a Christmas meal at Samotchny Lane. "If we can swallow the contradiction of celebrating the October Revolution and Boris Yeltsin's Constitution Day, then it's not difficult for us to add another Christmas to our repertoire. I won't have any more Brussels sprouts but we mince pies look nice."

And so begins a marathon of feasting that takes us from Western Christmas to New Year to Rozhdestvo, or Russian Orthodox Christmas, 16-7 January to the night of 4 January, which is "Old New Year" according to the pre-

revolutionary calendar. For most Russians, the new year holiday that they learnt to love in Soviet childhood retains the strongest magic.

"We had never heard of Christmas then," said Sasha. "Even our own Rozhdestvo was a low-key affair because the communists did not encourage the Orthodox church. But we always celebrated New Year with a bang. We had champagne and salad and watched With Light Steam and Blue Flame. If we were lucky, we would see some Western pop groups like Boney M."

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On Sunday, Muscovites were also wandering among the kiosks in the city centre, looking for presents. It will be a thin new year because of the economic crisis. "Madness," said a woman when she saw the prices of nothing more extravagant than bars of white chocolate. "Those of a nervous disposition are advised not to window shop," joked the old man behind her.

New year here is still less commercial than Christmas in the West. Poor Russians usually give or receive only one present. There is a simplicity about it that we have lost.

Popular gifts this year are little glass rabbits, selling for 15 roubles (50p), for 1998 will be the Chinese Year of the Rabbit. Alongside Western traditions, Russians have also adopted the Chinese and are hoping that the peaceful rabbit will bring them better luck than the outgoing tiger that proved so harsh to them in 1998.

HELEN WOMACK

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Deputy Business & City Editor, Michael Harrison
News desk: 0171-293 2636 Fax: 0171-293 2098
E-mail: IndyBusiness@Independent.co.uk

BUSINESS

BRIEFING

Oil price hits a 12-year low

THE PRICE of oil hit a 12 year low yesterday after the four days of Anglo-US air attacks in Iraq ended without interruption to oil supplies. In London, benchmark February Brent fell 40 cents to \$35.58 a barrel, after Western industry officials said initial assessments indicated the air strikes had not damaged Iraq's oil export facilities. Meanwhile, in its latest World Economic Outlook, the International Monetary Fund predicted oil prices would stage a partial recovery next year. The IMF has estimated an average oil price in 1999 of \$45.51, compared to \$33.29 in 1998.

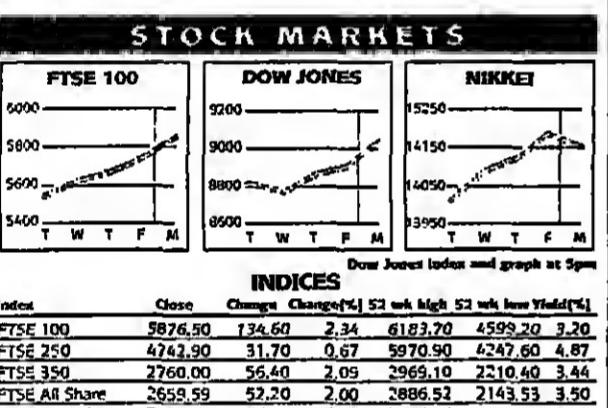
SFA clears Thomson Travel

 THE Securities and Futures Authority yesterday said it would not take disciplinary action against any party involved in the £1.7bn flotation of Thomson Travel. The City watchdog launched an inquiry following the May listing of the tour operator led by the chief executive Paul Brett (pictured). Hundreds of small investors had complained that they could not buy shares because their application form was late. The SFA, which received almost 1,000 complaints from disgruntled shareholders, said that there were no grounds for disciplinary action. However, it added that it would examine whether the guidance to firms on certain aspects of the flotation was appropriate.

Dagenham agrees £28.3m bid

FORD motor dealership Dagenham Motors yesterday agreed the proposed £28.3 million, 160p per share takeover offer from a joint venture formed by the Ford Motor company and Jardine International Motor Holdings. Dagenham, which saw its shares fall 16p to 151.50 on the day, also warned that because of "difficult" trading conditions in the fourth quarter of 1998 it now expects profits for the year to be below those of 1997.

Discussions between Ford and Jardine about a joint offer for Dagenham were announced in September and the joint venture was established in November for the purpose of making a bid. Dagenham said that no further announcement will be made about the offer until early in the New Year.



GEC prepares to end the suspense

THE SUSPENSE is killing me ... I hope it lasts," says Gene Wilder in that hardy Christmas perennial, *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*. Now we have another Yuletide nailbiter on our hands - George and the Giant Defence Merger (subtitle: Which Way Will GEC Jump?).

Ever since Lord Simpson promised three weeks ago that he would reach a decision "soon" on who he was going to pair up with in the great defence consolidation game, the expectation has been mounting. Now that GEC has let it be known that it hopes to make an announcement this side of Christmas, the agony of anticipation has become quite exquisite.

Will it be the French, those mighty lovers who want to dominate every match? Will the bride be American - after all, transatlantic marriages are all the rage these days? Or will George finally do the decent thing and name the date with his old flame at British Aerospace, Sir Dick Evans?

The speculation has not hurt the share price - GEC stock was up another 5 per cent yesterday to 556, a shade beneath its high for the year. BAe was dragged along



OUTLOOK

in the slipstream, climbing by a similar amount.

Alas, none of the speculation gets us any nearer an answer. GEC may have tantalised us with the promise of an early denouement which accompanied its interim results. But it also sent up enough chaff to confuse the stealthiest truth-seeking missile.

An American merger would make sense because GEC knows the terrain, having already snapped up Tracor for £300m, and - more importantly - because it is trusted by the Pentagon.

But a French deal also has its merits as it would give GEC a voice at the top table in the construction

of the long-awaited European Aerospace and Defence Company. GEC has tried and failed before to hold hands with its opposite number in France, Thomson CSF, only to fall foul of Gallic chauvinism. But time and politics have moved on. One method of joining forces could be through its French partner Alcatel, which has a 16 per cent holding in Thomson.

But the "dream merger" of GEC and BAe is the one that whets the appetite. There are formidable hurdles to jump - the vexed question of valuation for one, and what to do with the bit of GEC that makes Hotpoint fridges for another. There is another snag, which is that Sir Dick is betrothed to Manfred at Daimler Chrysler Aerospace.

The British government would rather like to engineer a ménage à trois between all three companies. Perhaps we shall not have to wait long to see.

AMP-NPI

THE HEADLINE number looks high as NPI policyholders have discovered to their cost over the

years, it is the bits that have been squirrelled away from view that give a truer picture of the state of affairs. AMP of Australia says that NPI's half a million members will benefit to the tune of £2.7bn from the takeover announced yesterday. It may also snow in Sydney this Christmas.

The figures do indeed accumulate to £2.7bn, but it is hard to see how this deal is down from under values NPI at anything like that. The only new money on offer is the £510m AMP is paying for goodwill. The balance is made up of £1.4bn of policyholders' own money and an £800m financing facility that AMP will generously make available to policyholders on commercial terms.

That makes it rather a good deal for AMP. Without overpaying, the Aussies have picked up a life business with a strong brand name and excellent distribution capabilities that can be integrated with their existing Pearl Assurance arm in the UK.

But it is an indifferent deal for NPI policyholders. The £800 cash payout dangled before with-profits policyholders may be enough to book next summer's holiday now.

But it is peanuts compared to the sums they could have had if they lodged their money with a life fund other than NPI. A policyholder who has been putting, say, £50 a month into an NPI endowment for the last 25 years can expect to see the fund mature with a value of £64,000 against the £120,000 that could have been earned with another life company.

AMP intends to distribute the £1.4bn built up in NPI's life fund. But this is hardly largess on the part of the Australians. This sum represents the assets backing their policies, a large chunk of which would have been distributed eventually to policyholders anyway in the form of terminal bonuses.

Even that £1.4bn is a movable feast as the figure was struck at the end of last year. Since then NPI has mortgaged £260m of its future earnings through a securitisation deal and may have to fork out £350m to cover its exposure to guaranteed annuity payments.

Policyholders could, of course, vote down the deal in the spring, but in reality their choice is to like it or lump it. The chances of a better offer from elsewhere are virtually nil as the auction has already

been long and exhaustive. Nor does soldiering on alone look like an option for NPI. The poor management of the company which has brought about its weakened financial condition meant that NPI had little future as a viable independent life office. Hardly a good prospectus on which to go to the market, as NPI policyholders are discovering.

UK economy

THE INTERNATIONAL Monetary Fund yesterday added its voice to the growing calls for more cuts in UK interest rates.

But the IMF, the Confederation for British Industry, the unions and just about everybody else you can think of may be disappointed, at least in the near term.

The latest indicators suggest the economy is not in as bad a shape as some of the more gloomy pundits were suggesting in the autumn.

Of particular note is the surprising strength of November's retail sales, released last week. Supposing the data can be trusted, which is a big if these days, con-

sumer confidence is not quite as low as feared. This, combined with evidence of continued growth in the services sector, may be enough to persuade the Bank of England to sit on its hands in January, although another cut is still on the cards in February.

In common with every other forecaster apart from the Treasury, the IMF finds it impossible to go along with the growth forecasts that Gordon Brown has assumed for next year and on which his ability to stick to the golden rule or borrowing only to invest depend.

The Chancellor believes growth will be between 1 and 1.5 per cent. The IMF, with the benefit of a little more hindsight and factoring in the impact of the Russian default crisis and the credit squeeze foreshadowed by the near collapse of LTCM, reckons growth will undershoot 1 per cent.

However, it does, along with Mr Brown, believe that the slowdown next year will be shortlived, partly because of rate cuts here and elsewhere.

This all means that the Bank should be wary of cutting too far too fast and storing up trouble further down the line.

IN BRIEF

Bass chief to get £400,000 pension

SIR IAIN PROSSER, chief executive of Bass, will be entitled to a pension of £400,000 a year in three years' time. Sir Iain, who is 55, will be entitled to a full pension from the age of 58 even though the normal pension age at the brewing and hotel giant is 60.

The figures were disclosed in Bass's annual report, which also revealed that Sir Iain has been awarded 107,000 Bass shares worth £717,000 as part of the company's long-term incentive plan. In the year to September, Sir Iain received a salary of £914,000, an 11 per cent increase over the previous year.

ONS confident

THE OFFICE for National Statistics (ONS) said it had "absolute confidence" in its retail sales data, following criticism of recent official figures by leading UK retailers.

The ONS said official retail sales figures were based on a 5,000-strong sample of firms drawn from all parts of the retail sector, and, unlike survey data, were based on cash through the till, rather than comparisons with the previous year's trading.

Modern fund

THE TREASURY yesterday launched a new £2.5bn fund to support innovative investment projects which modernise and reform public services. The Capital Modernisation Fund will be allocated to government departments on a competitive basis.

Panel firm folds

CHRISTIES PANEL Products, a manufacturer and retailer of fitted furniture, yesterday called in administrators after making 370 staff redundant on Friday. Pannell Kerr Forster, the administrators, said the Bristol-based company was forced into the move by the recession in the furniture market.

ICI sale

QUEST INTERNATIONAL, a wholly owned subsidiary of ICI, yesterday completed the sale of its Natural Colours business to Christian Hansen of Denmark for \$55m (£38m). ICI said the proceeds would be used to reduce debt.

United News deal

UNITED NEWS & Media yesterday announced the purchase of NewsDesk International, an Internet service which distributes corporate news to journalists writing about high-tech stocks, for an undisclosed sum. The newswire service, believed to be worth around £15m, will become part of PR Newswire, a United subsidiary.

Telewest stake

THE FRENCH conglomerate Vivendi yesterday sold its remaining 6.5 per cent stake in the British cable television company Telewest, the stock market for £209m. Telewest shares rose 6.25p on the news to 160.25p.

News Analysis: How can life insurers provide the retirement income they guaranteed?

The £10bn annuity timebomb

BY ANDREW VERITY



Life offices are caught in a trap, but the Treasury has warned them not to cut back on the benefits pensioners can expect Brian Harris

severely face an unpleasant gap between the amount they receive in pension savings and the cost of financing the annuity they had promised.

Worse, the actuaries of the 1960s failed to take into account longer life expectancy. As people now live longer, annuity money is stretched over a longer period. The life office can't afford to pay as much in annual income, but the guarantees may force them to.

The sales gimmick usually involved a clause promising customers a minimum annuity rate. Typically the clauses guaranteed an income worth at least 11 per cent a year of the amount saved, so £100,000 would yield an annuity income of at least £11,000.

Life offices believed the guarantees would cost them little. Since the Second World War long-term interest rates had been high, a reflection of the inflationary climate. It seemed highly unlikely that annuity rates, based on long-term interest rates, would fall below the guaranteed level.

Now comes the euro. In the past two years, as markets anticipate lower rates of interest, gilt yields have plunged to unprecedented lows. Life offices, caught in a trap, they set them-

The total cost to the industry is estimated by the Government Actuary to be more than £7bn. HSBC Securities estimates that further market changes could push this to £10bn.

Unlike pension mis-selling, the guarantees are spectacularly good news for customers, especially those about to retire. Without them customers would have to plump for an annuity based on current market conditions. With long-term interest

rates so low, these give smaller retirement incomes than they have done for 30 years.

Stuart Bayliss of specialist adviser Annuity Direct says that by insisting on the guarantees, customers can bump up their retirement income by an average of 25 per cent. Policyholders may be unaware that they can get this benefit if the industry does little to publicise it.

There is now increasing tension between the industry and the Government over the issue. Equitable Life, thought by some to have a potential liability of more than £1bn, is embroiled in a legal battle with policyholders who claim it should pay up on guarantees.

Equitable claims that it only has to honour the guarantees in respect of part of a customer's pension saving. The terminal bonus - a sum paid on maturity and often worth tens of thousands of pounds - need not necessarily be paid to people who want the guarantee.

Policyholders claim this was never made clear and are now taking legal action against the society. Equitable claims the

wording of its guarantees fully justifies its stance, but many believe the Treasury is becoming irritated by this attitude.

Last week Patricia Hewitt, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, wrote a letter to the industry warning that the annuity guarantee problem must not be allowed to affect the benefits policyholders can reasonably expect from policies.

In other words, life offices should not lower their bonuses to pay for the problem: any extra money needed should come from free assets.

The letter was interpreted as a veiled swipe at Equitable, which has comparatively few free assets. If it were forced to pay the guarantees from free assets, the impact on its financial health could be serious. It could even have to demutualise.

Ms Hewitt said the cost of the problem would largely be borne by the long-term funds held by life offices. In quoted companies, these are 90 per cent owned by policyholders, while shareholders have a 10 per cent stake. So most of the cost is borne by policyholders.

But if the £7bn required to pay the guarantees grows, bonuses may be affected. In that case, says Ms Hewitt, shareholders will have to plough more money into the funds.

For the moment, most life offices have enough free assets to set aside the cost of the guarantees without slashing policyholders' benefits. But it could get worse.

John Russell, a senior analyst at HSBC Equities, feels that is more than a distant possibility. The cost of the guarantees depends on long-term interest rates: the lower they are, the more the guarantees cost.

If economists' forecasting a period of deflation are correct, long-term interest rates could fall even further, massively increasing life offices' exposure.

To escape further trouble, life offices need higher interest rates, and that needs higher inflation.

Mr Russell says: "Having worried about inflation for the last 30 years, the hole the industry has dug for itself is to be in a position where deflation is more of a threat. Inflation could, paradoxically, let the industry off the hook."

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With profits in the normally stronger second half of the year likely to be broadly similar to the first half's £2.2m, the company is predicting a pre-tax loss once these exceptional charges are taken into account.

Ushers, which owns the brewery in Wiltshire and an estate of 574 pubs in the Midlands, South and South-West England and South Wales, was originally part of Grand Metropolitan, but was sold off in 1991 to a management team led by three GrandMet directors.

The pub estate reported a 14 per cent increase, and 5 per cent on a like-for-like basis, ahead of the UK market average.

Insurer	Estimated exposure to annuity guarantee problem
Equitable Life	£1bn
NPI (owned by AMP)	£300m
Scottish Amicable (owned by Prudential)	£300m
Sun Life of Canada	£114m
Legal & General	£50m
Prudential	£50m
Sun Life & Provincial	Unspecified exposure (probably more than £100m)
Norwich Union	Unspecified exposure (more than £100m)
Scottish Mutual	Unspecified exposure (under £20m)
Friends Provident	Unspecified exposure (under £20m)
Britannic	Unspecified exposure (under £20m)
United Assurance Group	Unspecified exposure (under £20m)

* indicates insurer has already reserved for liabilities

BY CLIFFORD GERMAN

USHERS OF Trowbridge the regional brewer whose shares were floated in March last year at 110p a share, is set to return to the private sector under its existing management after a chequered career as a public company which cost it an estimated £3.5m in fees.

Alchemy, the Guernsey-based venture capital specialist whose initial bid of 117p lapsed after just a fortnight last Octo-

ber and 15 per cent above the closing price of 97.5p last Friday. The shares rose 13p to 110.5p yesterday.

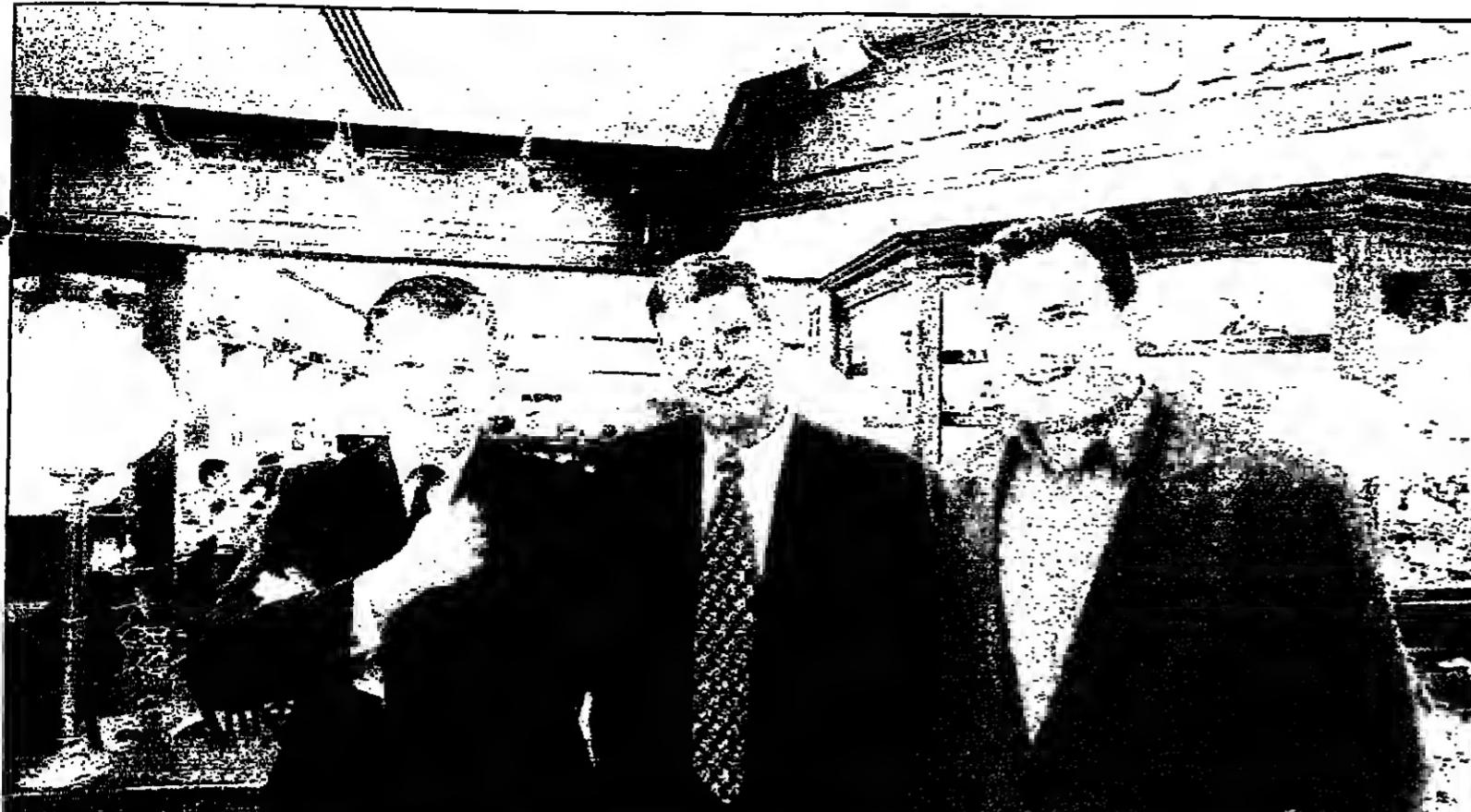
Three venture capital groups which hold 49.3 per cent of the shares - Schroders Buy-Out Fund Number 2, SBC Equity Partners and Indelec, an SBC venture fund - have agreed to accept a reduced price of 106p for their holdings in order to bridge a gap be-

tween the maximum price the buyout team was willing to offer and the minimum price the independent directors were willing to accept on behalf of the private shareholders.

The management team will also sell their 7.7 per cent stake in the company in a separate deal, and surrender their options over a further 1.4 per cent, in return for a package of new shares and loan stock

valued at £2.3m plus £6.25m in cash. Their contracts will be unchanged, and the 330 employees have also been given continuity of employment.

Roger North, chief executive, said the buyout would give the management greater freedom to run the business and end a period of uncertainty which had



Coffee bar group City Gourmets yesterday took control of Newultra Limited in a £1.75m deal giving it six Rendezvous shops to take its total of coffee bars to 29. City Gourmets' shares closed down 0.5p at 29.5p. Pictured (left to right) at Rendezvous in Brent Cross, London, are City Gourmets property director Simon Broackes, chairman Nigel Whittaker and chief executive Gareth Lloyd Jones Tony Andrews

Housebuilder Tay fights off rebel investor

TAY HOMES, a small Northern housebuilder, yesterday angrily rejected proposals by a major shareholder for a complete overhaul of the board.

The company said the attempt by Sunley Family Limited to change the management was a "loser". Norman Stubbs, the chairman, said Sunley, a privately-owned housebuilder, was wasting its time as the board had enough institutional support to defeat a shareholders' revolt.

The rebel investor, which owns 10 per cent of Tay, wants to Mr Stubbs and chief executive John Swanson replaced by Peter Hedges, a former deputy chairman at construction group Taylor Woodrow, and Sunley head Richard Tice. The little-known company is seeking to capitalise on some institutions' anger at Tay Homes' performance. The shares have been hit hard by the slowdown in the North of England, collapsing from 142.5p in March to 111.5p yesterday.

Sunley is understood to have the backing of Phillips & Drew, which owns 17 per cent of Tay. However, Mr Stubbs said the

BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA

current board owned 23 per cent and was supported by most shareholders. Fidelity, with 10 per cent, and Foreign & Colonial with 7 per cent, are thought to support the board.

"This is just an attempt by a £20m-a-year company to win control of a £150m-a-year rival without paying a premium," said Mr Stubbs. Tay, which has a market value of around £30m, would seek to improve performance and grow through mergers with rivals of similar size, he said. "We would like a market capitalisation of around £150m through tie-ups with other small housebuilders."

Tay announced that it would scale down its operations in the North-west due to poor market conditions. The company said it would stop buying land in the area, which accounts for around a third of its 1,500 annual completions. The change would save £20m at year-end, including 13 layoffs. The money will be spent to increase volume in Tay's other regions, Scotland, Yorkshire and Oxfordshire.

Photobition targets Wace with £42m bid

PHOTOBITION, the aggressive graphics group, yesterday launched a hostile bid for Wace, its troubled rival, valuing each Wace share at 52.5p and the entire company at £41.7m, writes Peter Thal Larsen.

The offer was unanimously rejected by Wace's board as offering "inadequate value" to its shareholders, and it advised them not to take any action.

Photobition proposes merging its operations with Wace in a move to create a world leader in digital services with a network covering the UK, Europe, US, Australia and Hong Kong.

Eddie Marchbanks, Photobition chief executive, said he had approached Wace's man-

agement. "We had lunch about three weeks ago and I said we would be interested in bidding at a certain level. But they never got back to me."

A deal would almost certainly lead to job losses. Wace has 2,000 employees, about 500 in the UK. Photobition, which has roughly the same turnover, employs 1,050. "There may be a good reason why they have so many more staff, but I've got to get inside and have a look before I can answer that question," Mr Marchbanks said.

Wace shares jumped 10p to 51.5p, while shares in Photobition, which launched a 259m share placing to help fund any deal, dipped 1p to 239p.

Product Recall Notice Dream Cuisine and Premier 360° Cordless Filter Kettles



A potential problem has been identified with the above Kettle. Model Nos. WJ760, 761, 762 and BJ280, that could, over a period of extended use in hard water areas, cause the handle to overheat.

In the interests of customer satisfaction, and as a precautionary measure, the kettles have been withdrawn from sale. Anyone who has purchased one of these products should return it to the retailer concerned where a full refund will be given. A receipt is not necessary.

In case of difficulty, please call 0181 787 3111.

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e-business tools

Tough markets prompt ASW bid for rival Co-Steel

BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA

the combined group implements large cuts in production.

Insiders said ASW's takeover approach was driven by its need to mitigate the effect of tough market conditions on earnings. They added that the two companies operated in the same markets and would be able to extract "massive rationalisation benefits" from a merger.

Sources said the deal could be completed this week. They added that a tie-up between ASW, the UK leader in the production of steel for the construction industry, and Co-Steel would lead to a number of redundancies among the enlarged group's 3,200 workers.

Most job losses are set to come from the floors of ASW's Cardiff factory and Co-Steel's works in Sheerness, Kent, as

£700,000 on turnover of £460m as steel prices fell. Co-Steel Sheerness turned over £150m, mostly in its Kent plant, which has the capacity to produce about one million tons of steel a year.

The company, founded in 1971, accounts for around a quarter of its Canadian parent's annual production. Co-Steel Inc is one of the world's largest steel producers: last year it had sales of \$1.6bn (£950m) and lost \$29.1m.

Buying Co-Steel Sheerness would help ASW strengthen its position in the production of steel for building contractors and civil engineers. It is already a leading European player with plants in the UK, France, Holland, Belgium and Italy.

Both companies said a merger would not give rise to competition issues as the European steel market is fragmented.

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18/SHARES

Stock	Price	Chg	Tm	P/E Code	Stock	Price	Chg	Tm	P/E Code	Stock	Price	Chg	Tm	P/E Code	Stock	Price	Chg	Tm	P/E Code	Stock	Price	Chg	Tm	P/E Code	Stock	Price	Chg	Tm	P/E Code
High Low Stock	1.00	0.00	52 week	High Low Stock	1.00	0.00	52 week	High Low Stock	1.00	0.00	52 week	High Low Stock	1.00	0.00	52 week	High Low Stock	1.00	0.00	52 week	High Low Stock	1.00	0.00	52 week	High Low Stock	1.00	0.00	52 week	High Low Stock	
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES	0.2000				52 weeks																								
894 385 Allied Breweries	647.5	-1.3	4.6	100.00	105.5	-0.0	45	97	105.5	-0.0	45	97	105.5	-0.0	45	97	105.5	-0.0	45	97	105.5	-0.0	45	97	105.5	-0.0	45	97	
413 722 Bungee Ltd	330.0	-0.3	17.4	112.00	105.5	-0.0	75	100	110.5	-0.0	75	100	110.5	-0.0	75	100	110.5	-0.0	75	100	110.5	-0.0	75	100	110.5	-0.0	75	100	
785 478 Bausch	849.5	-0.2	5.4	14.00	105.5	-0.0	20	15.00	110.5	-0.0	20	15.00	110.5	-0.0	20	15.00	-0.0	20	15.00	110.5	-0.0	20	15.00	110.5	-0.0	20	15.00		
555 665 Orange Grove	867.0	-0.5	4.5	15.00	105.5	-0.0	20	15.00	110.5	-0.0	20	15.00	-0.0	20	15.00	-0.0	20	15.00	110.5	-0.0	20	15.00	110.5	-0.0	20	15.00			
323 225 Highfenders	206.5	0.1	4.5	11.00	105.5	-0.0	20	15.00	110.5	-0.0	20	15.00	-0.0	20	15.00	-0.0	20	15.00	110.5	-0.0	20	15.00	110.5	-0.0	20	15.00			
243 115 Matson Corp	242.0	-0.0	8.7	83.00	105.5	-0.0	50	50.00	110.5	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	110.5	-0.0	50	50.00	110.5	-0.0	50	50.00			
DISTRIBUTORS	0.0000				52 weeks																								
722 672 Albany Int'l	184.0	6.0	12.2	12.20	105.5	-0.0	50	50.00	110.5	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00		
102 554 ASI	102.5	0.0	24.0	10.00	105.5	-0.0	50	50.00	110.5	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00		
101 755 Atlantic Int'l	500.0	1.3	11.1	11.10	105.5	-0.0	50	50.00	110.5	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00		
1966 684 Beaufort	137.0	0.0	18.0	18.00	105.5	-0.0	50	50.00	110.5	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00		
920 671 BellSouth	715.5	1.5	11.5	11.50	105.5	-0.0	50	50.00	110.5	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00		
277 575 BHP Billiton	185.0	2.0	11.0	11.00	105.5	-0.0	50	50.00	110.5	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00		
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111 555 BHP Billiton	185.0	2.0	11.0	11.00	105.5	-0.0	50	50.00	110.5	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00		
111 555 BHP Billiton	185.0	2.0	11.0	11.00	105.5	-0.0	50	50.00	110.5	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00		
111 555 BHP Billiton	185.0	2.0	11.0	11.00	105.5	-0.0	50	50.00	110.5	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00		
BREWERIES PUBS & RESTAURANTS	2.0000				52 weeks																								
117 631 Bausa	895.0	4.0	4.4	18.00	105.5	-0.0	50	50.00	110.5	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00		
117 631 Bausa	895.0	4.0	4.4	18.00	105.5	-0.0	50	50.00	110.5	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00		
117 631 Bausa	895.0	4.0	4.4	18.00	105.5	-0.0	50	50.00	110.5	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00		
117 631 Bausa	895.0	4.0	4.4	18.00	105.5	-0.0	50	50.00	110.5	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00		
117 631 Bausa	895.0	4.0	4.4	18.00	105.5	-0.0	50	50.00	110.5	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00		
117 631 Bausa	895.0	4.0	4.4	18.00	105.5	-0.0	50	50.00	110.5	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00		
117 631 Bausa	895.0	4.0	4.4	18.00	105.5	-0.0	50	50.00	110.5	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00		
117 631 Bausa	895.0	4.0	4.4	18.00	105.5	-0.0	50	50.00	110.5	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00	-0.0	50	50.00		
117 631 Bausa	895.0	4.0	4.4	18.00	105.5	-0.0	50	50.00																					

Blue chips in short supply as Footsie surges

FOOTIE ACHIEVED its fifth consecutive gain, stretching to its highest since the end of July.

Conditions were decidedly squeeze, with a blue chip stock shortage exaggerating many movements amid signs of end-of-year window-dressing.

Fund-to-fund bed and breakfast deals and the purchase of 236.5 million Ibsstock shares by CRH ballooned the day's volume to an unprecedented 933.3 million.

Many major institutions are deliberately sitting on the sidelines in the run up to the launch of the euro. But the pending arrival of the controversial currency is thought to have provoked some defensive buying, particularly from overseas.

Footsie surged 134.6 points to 5,876.5. Mid cap shares were relatively strong, gaining 31.7 to 4,742.9 but the poor old small caps could manage only a 6.5 gain to 2,022.5.

Two still-speculative take-over situations absorbed much of the interest.

Wal-Mart's European arm

DELPHI IS believed to be near to completing two disposals - unloading its troublesome US offshoot, Alpine, for £17m and selling its 30.3 per cent stake in the French group Decan for some £28m.

Shares of the IT recruitment group rose 23.5p to 292.5p in hrist trading on hopes that the deals will leave the company cash-positive. The shares have crashed from 827.5p earlier this year and topped the 900p mark two years ago.

bitions continued to create excitement among possible targets, and the signalised British Aerospace merger with DaimlerChrysler and/or General Electric Co - or perhaps even a three-way deal - kept some players on their toes.

Ever since Wal-Mart, the huge US pile-it-high retailer, let it slip it wanted to expand in Europe the stock market has done its best to provide a target.

Asda, the supermarkets chain, is its favourite but MFI, the hard-pressed furniture retailer, and even J Sainsbury have been cited as candidates for Wal-Mart's attentions.

Asda, which said last week it had not bad discussions with the US group, gained 6.75p to 159p, and MFI added 4.25p to 32p. J Sainsbury was lifted 5p to 469.5p.

Most observers believe the loss-making MFI's stores are too small to attract Wal-Mart. But Asda, which also scored from favourable comments from Dresden Kleinwort Benson and HSBC, and Sains-



DEREK PAIN

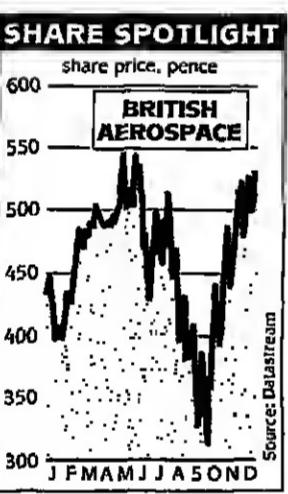
bure are much nearer the Wal-Mart pattern.

Bae rose 21.5p to 531p. It has been talking to the German DaimlerChrysler group for months and seemed near to clinching a deal. Then General Electric Co, up 27.5p to 566p, tossed its not inconsequential hat into the ring.

Now there are suggestions that the longstanding BAe/GEC merger has again been wheeled out and dusted down, or that GEC's defence operations will be injected into BAe. With the arrival of GEC the Germans are becoming increasingly unhappy about what they see as BAe's dithering.

Financials had a strong day with Prudential Corporation 41.5p higher at 856.5p and Barclays Cap at 1,387p.

Reed International continued to benefit from rumours of a Microsoft deal with its Dutch relations.



ing the shares 13p higher at 110.5p.

But Dagenham Motors reversed 16p to 151.5p as its signalled bid materialised at only 160p a share.

Profit warnings provided a chill touch to the festive cheer. Gremlin, a computer games maker, slumped 34p to 91.5p; the clothing group Dawson International's latest gloom shot left the shares 2.5p off at 10p. They were once 159p.

Villiers, an engineer expected to announce a significant acquisition, hardened 0.5p to 9p, and MSI International, an IT recruitment group, continued to soar on its upbeat trading statement, gaining a further 44.5p to 249.5p.

The appointment of June de Mofer, retiring managing director of Carlton Communications, to the board of Lynx, a computer group, was enough for a 15.5p gain to 181p.

SEAQ VOLUME: 932.3m SEAQ TRADES: 56,922 GILTS INDEX:

COMPANY RESULTS

Name	Turnover (£)	Pre-tax (£)	EPS	Dividend	Pay day	X-div
Peel Holdings (I)	38.50m (34.30m)	6.25m (5.82m)	4.93p (3.85p)	3.20p (7.79)	06/04/99	01/03/99
UK Land (I)	(-)	0.532m (0.30m)	0.06p (0.03p)	n/a (-)	-	-
Univas (F)	1.81m (4.87m)	-0.051m (0.33m)	-18.35p (2.20)	n/a (0.25p)	08/02/99	04/01/99
Units of Trawsfynydd Grp (F)	82.34m (70.51m)	13.35m (10.32m)	10.40p (9.62)	n/a (-)	-	-
(F) - Final (I) - Interim	-	-	-	-	-	-

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES

Country	Sterling	Spot	1 month	3 month	Dollar	Spot	1 month	3 month	3-Month	Spot
UK	1,0000	2,7150	2,7100	2,7117	0,5950	0,5954	0,5965	0,5975	0,5975	0,5965
Australia	2,7175	19,765	19,725	19,772	1,6158	1,6172	1,6175	1,6175	1,6175	1,6175
Canada	19,785	1,6175	1,6175	1,6177	1,7169	1,7169	1,7175	1,7175	1,7175	1,7175
China	58,028	37,601	37,601	37,601	34,175	34,175	34,175	34,175	34,175	34,175
Denmark	10,686	10,676	10,676	10,676	10,643	10,643	10,650	10,650	10,650	10,650
EURO	1,4314	1,4274	1,4274	1,4274	1,1742	1,1742	1,1756	1,1756	1,1756	1,1756
Finland	3,4446	3,4446	3,4446	3,4446	3,4024	3,4024	3,4024	3,4024	3,4024	3,4024
France	9,4005	9,3905	9,3905	9,3905	9,1610	9,1610	9,1610	9,1610	9,1610	9,1610
Germany	2,8115	2,8034	2,8034	2,8034	1,9705	1,9705	1,9728	1,9728	1,9728	1,9728
Greece	471,75	473,90	473,90	473,90	280,68	280,68	284,83	284,83	284,83	284,83
Hong Kong	13,019	13,040	13,040	13,040	1,1190	1,1190	1,1190	1,1190	1,1190	1,1190
Ireland	2,7845	2,7760	2,7760	2,7760	16,735	16,735	16,735	16,735	16,735	16,735
Italy	276,45	276,70	276,70	276,70	1,6567	1,6567	1,6567	1,6567	1,6567	1,6567
Japan	195,09	194,05	194,05	194,05	1,5923	1,5923	1,5923	1,5923	1,5923	1,5923
Malaysia	5,5220	5,5220	5,5220	5,5220	3,9560	3,9560	3,9560	3,9560	3,9560	3,9560
Netherlands	16,404	1,5957	1,5957	1,5957	1,5954	1,5954	1,5954	1,5954	1,5954	1,5954
New Zealand	3,688	3,688	3,688	3,688	1,8284	1,8284	1,8284	1,8284	1,8284	1,8284
Norway	1,7282	1,7282	1,7282	1,7282	1,5694	1,5694	1,5694	1,5694	1,5694	1,5694
Portugal	286,29	287,47	287,47	287,47	171,53	171,53	170,75	170,75	170,75	170,75
Saudi Arabia	6,3045	6,3100	6,3100	6,3100	3,7510	3,7510	3,7510	3,7510	3,7510	3,7510
Singapore	6,2015	6,0074	6,0074	6,0074	5,9048	5,9048	6,0781	6,0781	6,0781	6,0781
South Africa	1,0074	1,0174	1,0174	1,0174	1,0174	1,0174	1,0174	1,0174	1,0174	1,0174
Spain	239,27	237,66	237,66	237,66	142,36	142,36	141,71	141,71	141,71	141,71
Sweden	13,305	13,469	13,469	13,469	8,0500	8,0500	8,0500	8,0500	8,0500	8,0500
Switzerland	2,2774	2,2774	2,2774	2,2774	1,3611	1,3611	1,3467	1,3467	1,3467	1,3467
US	1,6008	1,6008	1,6008	1,6008	1,0000	1,0000	0,9875	0,9875	0,9875	0,9875

OTHER SPOT RATES

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	1,6808	1,0000	Oman	0,6470	0,3850
Brazil	2,0278	1,2065	Pakistan	0,6470	0,3850
China	13,913	6,2749	Poland	0,5381	0,3800
Costa Rica	0,73	0,4515	Portugal	0,5330	0,3705
Spain	5,3799	3,4151	Qatar	6,1171	3,6395
Ghana	393,00	230,40	Russia	321,99	214,9650
Hungary	357,70	22,5341	South Korea	2005,1	19,1100
Iceland	71,482	42,5341	Taiwan	19,1100	18,2424
Indonesia	127,73	77,0000	Thailand	60,759	36,1500
Kuwait	1,6006	0,3014	Turkey	52,562	31,0910
Nigeria	147,91	88,0000			

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Investment: Disposal of most of industrial division raises expectations

Rexam sell-off keeps up the transformation

BY PETER THAL LARSEN

Rexam took another step towards concentrating on its packaging businesses yesterday when it sold most of its industrial division for £195m.

SPORT

The word wars that made 1998

Winning the World Cup is the most beautiful thing to have happened to France since the Revolution. Emmanuel Petit of Arsenal and France.

Keep the planet clean: recycling footballers. Message on the 100 Per Cent Official Anti-Football web site on the Internet.

We're not much into football, but we support Scotland now. Mustafa Alsal, of the Eye of the Tiger restaurant, Bournemouth, after Scottish fans ordered £600 worth of curry and lager and an £800 flight to transport it to Bordeaux.

I'm out of the squad. Dsd. Cancel the holiday to France. Paul Gascoigne to his father after learning that he had not made England's World Cup squad.

If we are going to die, then we will die standing. We will fight to the last. Iran coach Jalal Talebi before their World Cup game against the United States.

You only sing when you're whaling. Scottish fans to their Norwegian counterparts.

An infant Colombian coffee-picker wearing a dunce's hat and holding a Fifa's certificate. Danish newspaper on John Jairo Toto after he sent off three players in the match against South Africa.

I am not an expert on soccer but I think the Brazilians are always hard to beat. Bill Clinton keeps his eye on the ball.

At this rate I will be defending myself in the Old Bailey soon. I'm not prepared to sit back and let people call me a cheat and treat me like a criminal. Croatia's Slaven Bilić on the flak he faced after getting Laurent Blanc sent off in the semi-final.

We were under Yugoslavia for 45 years and we couldn't say we were Croats. Now we can. Igor Stimac, of Croatia and Derby.

If we both win, I think the whole of Croatia will be drunk for the rest of the year. Croatian tennis player Goran Ivanisević, before the Wimbledon final and Croatia's World Cup semi-final.

If I felt I needed to apologise to anyone I would have done that by now. Glenn Hoddle, England football coach, defends his World Cup diary.

I'm not interested. What can a job like that do for me? You would have to be a masochist. Arsène Wenger, Arsenal manager, on the prospect of coaching England.

Sometimes now when I watch continental games on television, I'm a bit bored. I start to ask where is the intensity? Wenger:

I don't believe in retirement. It is against the law in America to force people to retire. I still have plenty of damage to do. Alex Ferguson, Manchester United manager.

These press conferences are a waste of time. The best thing I can do is get in, show my face and f... off. The then under-pressure Blackburn manager, Roy Hodgson.

If they want to go and get someone better for this job, then let them. Hodgson. Two days later he was sacked.

You have to speculate to accumulate. Steve Cotterill, Cheltenham manager, on the sponsoring of 41-year-old Clive Walker by a firm of undertakers.

Obviously he has Alzheimer's disease or something. I will never have dinner with him again. Martin O'Neill, Leicester manager, feeling let down by his chairman over a verbal agreement during the Leeds United managerial vacancy saga.

Thank goodness transfers have nothing to do with me. Terry Venables after it was revealed that £400,000 had vanished following the signing of Fan Zhiyi.

Our problem is not keeping the players out of nightclubs, it is getting them out of the banks. Paul Philipp, Luxembourg coach, on his team, made up mostly of bank clerks and insurance salesmen.

I'm not hiding under a rock. I want to look people in the eye.

Graham Kelly, after resigning as FA chief executive following the cash-for-Fifa-votes scandal.

At no stage did Wiseman accept that what he had done was wrong. He never said sorry and maintained that he had behaved correctly throughout. FA official on the meeting at which Graham Kelly resigned as chief executive and Keith Wiseman refused to as chairman.

The Pope put the ball in the penalty area. Now we just need Pele to tap it in. Eduardo Suplicy, Brazilian Senator, asks for Pele's help in ending the American embargo of Cuba.

He should only send in his letter requesting his reinstatement as an amateur with his death certificate. Senior PGA official on golfer Derek Lawrenson, who accepted a Lamborghini as a prize for a hole-in-one.

Please don't torture me any longer sir. I made a mistake ... I'm not going to kill anybody. I'm not a mass murderer. Mike Tyson's successful argument to the Nevada State Athletic Commission to reinstate his boxing licence.

I have no self-esteem but the biggest ego in the world. Tyson:

Mike's not all that bad. If you dig deep ... dig real deep, dig, dig, dig, dig, dig, go all the way to China ... I'm sure you'll find there is a nice guy in there. George Foreman on Tyson.

It makes me feel like weeping; he's a guy I like so much.

FEUDS AND FURY

'If I had a sword I'd cut off his head'

He came into the garage like an animal, saying I tried to kill him. David Coulthard after a shunt with Michael Schumacher at the Belgian Grand Prix.

Coulthard Killer. Italian banker at the next race, in Monza.

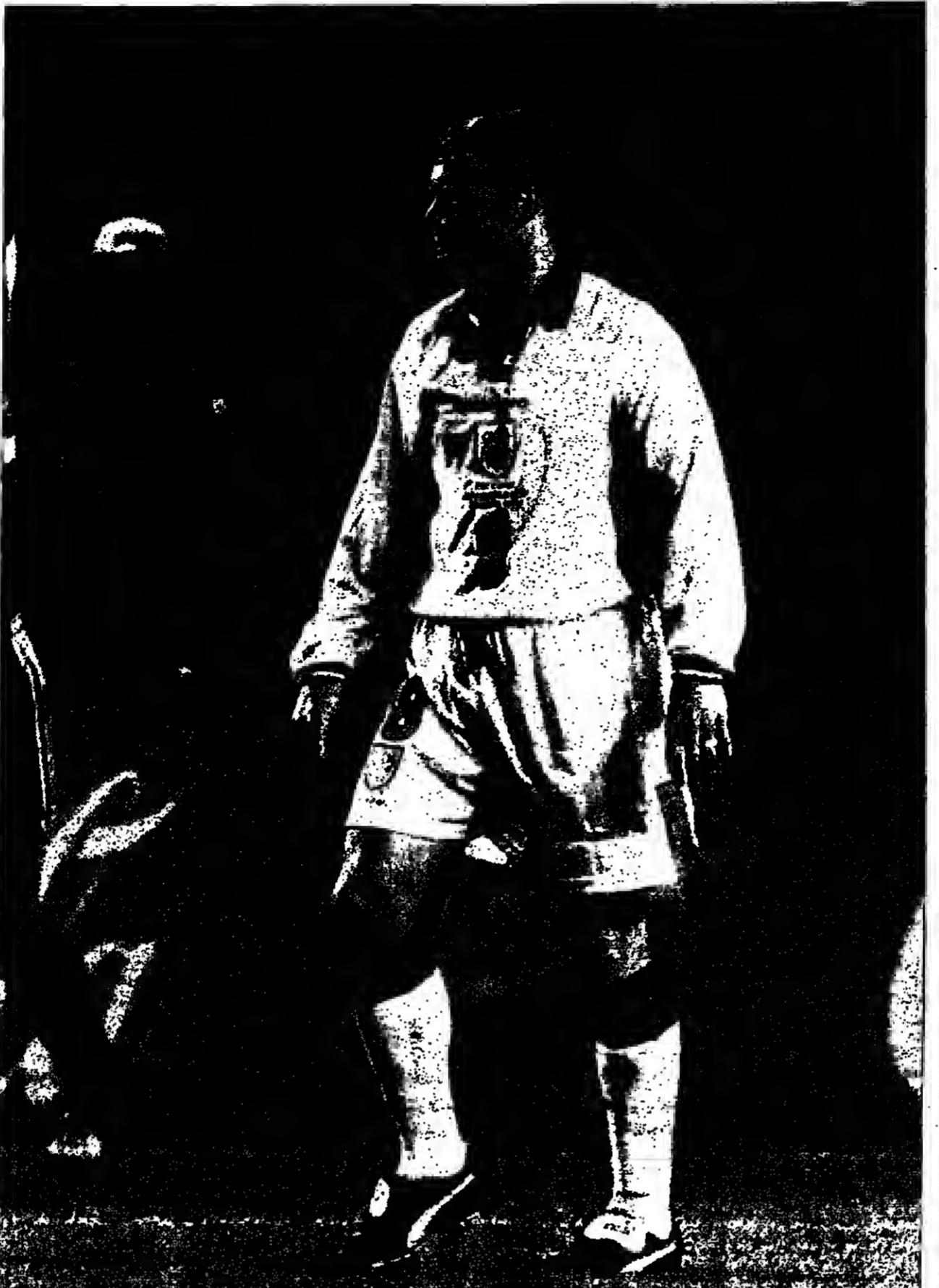
My only regret is that he's not still a fighter because if he was I would have battered him. Naseem Hamed on Barry McGuigan, who had written about Hamed's troubled relationship with his trainer, Brendan Ingle. Geoffrey Boycott: Shut up. Everybody's talking. I can't understand.

Translator: But I'm translating.

Boycott: Not very well. Geoffrey Boycott, in court on assault charges.

This club is not to be sold like some second-hand Jag by Martin Edwards and his cohorts. Andy Walsh, of the Manchester United Independent Supporters' Association, on the proposed takeover by Sky.

Everyone was cheering, thinking it was The Wolf and Three Little Piggies story. But then it went wrong when one of the pigs whacked Wolfe. There was another



I rang my dad two minutes after and he really gave me a boost by saying, "I knew you'd miss". David Batty turns away after having his penalty saved by Carlos Roa in the shoot-out against Argentina AP

Roy Francis, referee, on the

battering Chris Eubank

took from Carl Thompson.

Cheltenham is unique.

The only limitation on the amount

of money you can take is the

speed at which you can shove

it into your satchel. David

Boden, bookie.

I picked up my artificial arm

and threatened it. Mathew

Butson, New Zealand skier,

on the wild monkey, one of

200 in the Nagano area, that

leapt into his hotel room

from the balcony during the

winter Paralympics.

We will observe the law that says spectators cannot touch the sexual organs of the artist. Owner of club in which Finnish ski-jumper Matti Nykänen planned to perform as a stripper.

It's the greatest English sell-out since Anzac Day. I think the English will have their own fatal landings in Australia and New Zealand over the next few weeks. Dick McGrath, Australian Rugby Union chairman, on the

third Test against Australia.

It's always been the same here: if you lose they give you funny looks all the time. They love winners in Australia, whether it's their own team or someone else's. Graham Gooch, England cricket manager, after the third-Test defeat.

If you don't pick some new batters I promise you this will happen again in 2001. Ian Chappell, former Australian captain.

under-strength England

squad that performed disastrously on the tour of the southern hemisphere.

The very fabric of the great game is being damaged. Jagmohan Dalmiya, International Cricket Council president, on the match-fixing scandal.

It's not as if someone has declared war on us. Tony Banks, Sports Minister, on England's defeat in the

third Test against Australia.

It's always been the same here: if you lose they give you funny looks all the time. They love winners in Australia, whether it's their own team or someone else's. Graham Gooch, England cricket manager, after the third-Test defeat.

If you don't pick some new batters I promise you this will happen again in 2001. Ian Chappell, former Australian captain.

She told me after the foxrot that she did not feel very well.

She survived the tango but went down at the end of the quickstep. Alan Shingler on his wife Donna, who suffered concussion after colliding with an opponent at the British Professional Dance Championships.

VILE BODIES

'Exhausted? I had to go off with a heart attack'

In Cameroon, healers say they will be able to cure me in three days by burying my leg in the ground and putting fire around it. They have also recommended massage with gorilla bones while invoking the spirit of ancestors. Physiotherapy would include going on a hedgehog hunt.

Marc-Vivien Foé, of Cameroon, on treatment for his broken leg.

I'm a Catholic lad and if I want help I'll go to see the local priest, not a faith healer.

Robbie Fowler on the inclusion of Eileen Dwyer in Glenn Hoddle's World Cup preparations.

They have done without the Scouser who came up to me before the game and slapped me on the back and said "nice to see you". Fulham manager Kevin Keegan on his return to Liverpool in the Worthington Cup.

I felt like I had smoked about 10 joints. Adam Holloway on being dehydrated as England went out of the Wills International Cup in Dhaka.

That was racist behaviour: picking me out because I was an Italian. It was an atrocious injustice. I pushed the ref in his stomach, and he took

three or four backwards steps before falling over, like a player diving to win a penalty.

He should have given himself a yellow card. Paolo Di Canio of Sheffield Wednesday, after pushing over referee Paul Alcock following the Italian's dismissal.

I've managed a few nutters in my time but Paolo takes the biscuit.

Roo Atkinson, Di Canio's former Wednesday manager.

They drill us as if we were in the army. If somebody breaks my racket in anger, then a punishment machine is set in motion. That way, people are reduced to bloodless crea-

COMPILED BY CHRIS MAUME AND DOMINIC WOOD

DRINK AND DRUGS

'All the English need are beer and toilets'

Yes I was drunk, I got drunk quite quickly — I'd not had a drink in nine days. Paul Gascoigne on the night before he was dropped from England's World Cup squad.

If his behaviour continues as it is the boy's life will

progress in one of three ways. He will end up in the gutter, in prison, or he will die. If he doesn't change I am certain he will never celebrate his 40th birthday. Steve Jacobs, the addiction counsellor who treated Tony Adams, on Gascoigne.

In England, some players

boozes a lot. Those who have

been out on the town and smell of booze the next morning are the ones I set out

after. I chase them during

training and won't leave them alone. I'm a pest from the

first minute to the last. I can't stand those players who perform below standard because they choose to lead a wild life.

Dennis Bergkamp, of Arsenal and the Netherlands.

If you are dealing with the English all you need is beer and good toilets. Toulouse

bad owner during the World Cup.

Two people have died today — an alcoholic (the actor Kevin Lloyd) and an ex-footballer (Justin Fashanu). When you put it into that kind of per-

spective it is only a football game. Tony Adams, the day Arsenal had secured the Premiership title.

I know it is not good for football but I think this team will drink all week. It is a wonderful feeling.

Stephane Adam, Hearts striker, after his side's Scottish Cup final win over Rangers.

I'm beating demons every day but there has always been an angel on my shoulder looking after me. John Daly, golfer, after a year on the wagon.

We were treated like animals, like criminals. Dutch cyclist Jeroen Blijlevens on his hotel being raided by police searching for drugs during the Tour de France.

I am not being hypocritical but it is obvious no one can race day after day on mineral water and salad. Nicholas Chaine, communications director of Tour de France sponsors.

Fina (swimming's world governing body) is a coward ...

They are flickering, fluttering badge-wearers with no authority. They test for five when they know there are 25 substances. The [drug] guidelines are worthless. Mark Spitz on the Chinese growth hormone affair at the world swimming championships.

WOMEN IN THE WARS

'She went down at the end of the quickstep'

I'm finding it difficult to find a girlfriend in Barnsley. The local girls are far uglier than the ones back in Belgrade. Our women are much prettier. Macedonian striker Georgi Hristov.

If women want to put on make-up or dance around their handbags, they should be able to. But they should be free to box too. Jane Couch, woman boxer.

There's not much chance of me being a three page girl, maybe a page eight. I can't be a pin-up cause I've got no tits.

Coach, after her victory in Britain's first women's professional boxing match.

To say she is a world champion is an insult to boxing. Couch is a freak show ... She is of such a poor standard, she couldn't live in the ring with the worst amateur I could lay my hands on. It's a disgrace. Frank Maloney, promoter, on Couch's victory over Simona Lukic.

A lot of attitudes have changed but you still get the obvious knockers. Julia Lee, Britain's leading female

rugby league referee, on how spectators react to her.

Life as we know it is now over. MCC member after the vote to admit to women.

We are not misogynists. We love women dearly. But we want to go in as a bunch of lads to enjoy cricket, watch cricket, jaw about cricket over a few drinks — just as lads. Robert Lawrence, MCC member.

Winning a Grand Slam is easy for girls. Marcelo Rios, tennis player.

My soccer boots and an inflatable doll, because a month without a woman can be difficult. Belgium defender Eric Deleire on what he was taking with him to the World Cup.

She told me after the foxrot that she did not feel very well. She survived the tango but went down at the end of the quickstep. Alan Shingler on his wife Donna, who suffered concussion after colliding with an opponent at the British Professional Dance Championships.

DID THEY REALLY SAY THAT?

'Be strong when the fish are down'

White people no longer believe they can protect what is important to them. They are spineless. There is no marrow left in their bones. Louis Luyt, after resigning as president of the South African Rugby Football Union.

Everyone in the team would agree that we are absolutely as good as them. David Lloyd, England cricket coach, after the 242-run Test defeat to West Indies.

That was racist behaviour: picking me out because I was an Italian. It was an atrocious injustice. I pushed the ref in his stomach, and he took

three or four backwards steps before falling over, like a player diving to win a penalty.

He should have given himself a yellow card. Paolo Di Canio of Sheffield Wednesday, after pushing over referee Paul Alcock following the Italian's dismissal.

Decline of the All Blacks likely to be temporary

THE MOST interesting development of the last year has been the decline of New Zealand's strength, relative to Australia and South Africa. Why, they have lost almost as many games on the trot as Bath. So far the authorities have stayed loyal to their affable and intelligent coach, John Hart - who is very different from the grizzled monsters that have been presented to us in the past.

I have never agreed with the modern view of rugby, football and cricket alike, that coaches or managers (or whatever they are called) are invariably to blame when things go wrong - that they have what lawyers call "absolute liability". By the same reasoning, I do not think they should always be praised as supermen when things go right.



ALAN
WATKINS

But there is little doubt that Hart bears some of the responsibility for his country's uncertain performance of late. At outside-half he has the reverse of Clive Woodward's perennial English problem. While Woodward is struggling to find

one player who can fill the position, Hart has two performers of world class in Andrew Mehrtens and Carlos Spencer.

Oddy enough, this luxury of choice seems to have affected the form of both players. Mehrtens' goal-kicking has gone awry. When he has been dropped to make way for Spencer, the kicking at goal has been even more fragile. Christian Cullen may be the best attacking full-back in the world - challenged on recent evidence by Matt Burke, though not by Percy Montgomery. But Cullen is even less reliable as a goal-kicker than Spencer.

What Hart clearly has to do is make up his mind about the outside-half position and whether he is going to accommodate the discarded player at second five-eighths

or at centre. He should then find a completely new and reliable kicker at goal.

It has been evident since his return from his medical trouble that Jonah Lomu is not the player he was. Whether his kidneys are better or not - one hopes they are - his heart does not seem to be in it. He appears to be going through the motions. He resembles a young fast bowler who possesses great pace and menace but whose back suddenly lets him down. He has an operation; it is successful; he returns; but somehow it is not the same. The confidence has gone.

At the same time, players in England at any rate, who were alarmed by Lomu's sheer size during the last World Cup have become used to dealing with big backs. Any-

one who has had to tackle, say, Va'aiga Tuigamala week in and week out, or Scott Gibbs for that matter, is not going to be intimidated by Lomu; even though he is built differently from Tuigamala or Gibbs.

The big back is a development that has come to rugby union from rugby league. There is another development, arrived by the same route, which also renders players such as Lomu less dangerous than they were four years ago. This is the two or even three-player tackle, which is not pretty and smacks of hulking, but is nevertheless both legal and effective.

And then there is the New Zealand pack. Few expected either the forwards or the whole side to miss Sean Fitzpatrick quite as

much as they evidently have. Taine Randall, who was pushed into the captaincy too young and with too little experience, is clearly out an adequate substitute. He may also be at some difficulty in holding his place at No 6, come the World Cup.

There is the further question of body mass. New Zealand, to their credit, have never gone for sheer bulk. If a slightly more accomplished forward is up for selection against another who happens to be a stone heavier, it is the better rather than the heavier player who wins the vote; whereas in many other rugby countries the selectors' vote would go the other way.

The New Zealand selection policy has, until very recently, been completely vindicated. They have gone in for fit, hard, raw-boned for-

Books for Christmas: The nature of rugby genius and the genealogy of a tennis institution provide the festive focus

Baptists of fire and Boks of delight

BY CHRIS HEWITT

bugger bonhomie. Add to this the author's eye for a story, whether it be the truth behind Barry John's premature retirement or Mervyn Davies' near-fatal brain haemorrhage, and you have a fine read on your hands.

What Rugby: Body and Soul (Mainstream, £9.99) does give us is a unique insider's account of the nature of sporting genius. More than that, it is a glorious, if somewhat wistful hymn to the union game as a unifying social and cultural force. Its author, Bill Samuel, grew up in the Swansea Valley village of Craig-afon-parc, mined coal at the Clydach Merthyr Colliery, turned out for rugby clubs from Vardre to Cardiff via St Luke's College and Llanelli, and, some eight years after taking a teaching post in Pontardawe, took under his wing a gifted young oboist by the name of Gareth Edwards.

The rest, as they say, is history. And what a history it is. Samuel, an ugly modest witness as well as an incisive and entertaining one, tells his tale without fuss or artifice as he places the great scrum-half-to-be in the unglamorous but richly supportive context of his West Welsh surroundings. You can smell the sweat and the liniment, you can also revel in the soft, damp earth of a wonderful rugby nation at the height of its magnificence. Deeply touching, and in places, genuinely funny.

Edwards plays a part in the second of this season's outpourings of red-shirted Welshness. You might why a good Ulsterman like Peter Jackson, rugby correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, should spend his free time recording the memories of the Lions of Wales (Mainstream, £14.99), but he has lived in Cardiff for more years than anyone cares to remember and besides, any account of the 'Lions of Ireland' would have sent his already legendary phone bill into orbit.

Jackson's choice of interviewees is inspired: all the Olympians heroes - Gareth, Barry, JPR, Merv the Swerve - have a chapter to themselves as do the natural comics. Bobby Windsor's contribution is chokingly, rip-roaringly hilarious - the story of the gin, the ice cube and the earlobe thermometer is a classic - while Delme Thomas, that great man of Stradey, leaves an equally deep impression of rugger-



Gareth Edwards helps Wales to a 9-6 victory over England in his 50th international appearance in February 1978

Allsport

Dream that made the Davis Cup

BY JOHN ROBERTS

ALTHOUGH THE first Davis Cup match was played in 1900, the centenary of the event has been brought forward a year, possibly to avoid clashing with other celebrations, such as those marking the 21st century and the millennium.

Starting in Australia next month, Dwight Davis's imposing trophy - the silver punchbowl with accompanying silver tray atop two huge wooden plinths (a third is in the making with 30 engraved silver plaques) - is going on a grand tour to honour the 100th anniversary of the moment in 1899 when Davis, a Harvard student from a rich family, was inspired to propose the event.

The trophy is due to appear at Birmingham's National Indoor Arena in April for the match between Britain and the United States in the first round of the World Group. The original Davis Cup match was between the United States and the British Isles in Boston in August 1900.

Davis's idea for an international team event for tennis occurred after he read newspaper coverage of the sailing of the America's Cup races. Davis and a group of fellow tennis players had just returned to the East Coast of the United States after a

tour of the West Coast. "This trip resulted in great benefit to my career. My parents had brought me up to believe that it was an honour to be asked to play for and represent your country, and that is why I find it so strange - and so disheartening - that some of my compatriots seem to find it a burden."

McEnroe made his Davis Cup singles debut in the last match between the United States and Britain in 1978 final at the Mission Hills Country Club at Rancho Mirage, in the California desert. The turbulent left-hander contributed straight sets wins against John Lloyd (6-1, 6-2, 6-2) and Buster Mottram (6-2, 6-2, 6-1) as the Americans won, 4-1. "I've never been made to look an idiot on court before," Lloyd said. "Not by Borg, not by Connors, not by anyone until I played McEnroe today."

The anomaly is addressed by John McEnroe, who, it may be remembered, gave the best and worst of himself to America's cause, in a foreword to the International Tennis Federation's centenary book, *The Davis Cup* (Richard Evans, Ebury Press, £14.99).

"Davis Cup has brought countries together through sporting contact, often in the face of political opposition," McEnroe writes. "And, in the early years, it gave them the incentive to make those long journeys which are so commonplace and

easy for us now... The Davis Cup offered me more immediate pleasure than almost anything else I accomplished in my career. My parents had brought me up to believe that it was an honour to be asked to play for and represent your country, and that is why I find it so strange - and so disheartening - that some of my compatriots seem to find it a burden."

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Also brilliant and dedicated doubles player, usually partnered by Peter Fleming, McEnroe thrived on the special atmosphere of team play. And he was involved in the two longest singles matches in Davis Cup history, defeating Sweden's Mats Wilander in six hours and 22 minutes in St Louis in 1982 and los-

ing to Boris Becker after six hours and 21 minutes in Hartford in 1987. "That, for all his behavioural shortcomings, spoke volumes for his commitment to the cause," Evans writes. *The Davis Cup*, in which Evans acknowledges the diligent research of other authors, past and present, does old Dwight proud.

A biography of the founder of the competition, Dwight Davis - the Man and the Cup, by Nancy Kriplen, is due to be published by Ebury Press in March.

Given the retrospective mood, I take the liberty of recommending an American study of the game published in 1995, *Sporting Gentlemen - Men's Tennis from the Age of Honor to the Cult of the Superstar* by E. Dibny Baltzell, Simon and Schuster, available from Sportspages, £20) is a revealing social history befitting its author, emeritus professor of history and sociology at the University of Pennsylvania. "This book is the product of over half a century of playing and loving tennis and a decade spent in writing and research," Baltzell says. "As Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. once put it, 'A page of history is worth a volume of logic.' The prologue sets

the tone - "I began this book in 1984, the year Jimmy Connors and John McEnroe disgraced themselves and their country by their crude and rude behaviour in the course of losing to Sweden in the Davis Cup..."

The Ultimate Encyclopedia of Tennis - The Definitive Guide to World Tennis (by John Parsons, Carlton, £19.99) is not as modest as the title suggests. A labour of love, the book presents a broad perspective on the sport's great personalities and locations. Parsons pops up again with the text for *The Official Wimbledon Annual 1998* (Hawthorn Publishing, £20), illustrated by the All-sport photographic team of Gary M Prior, Mike Hewitt and Alex Livesey.

For the past eight years, Alan Little, the All England Club's honorary librarian, has produced what is regarded as the *Wisdom of Wimbledon*. The 1998 *Wimbledon Compendium* (The All England Club, £8) is essential for anyone interested every aspect of the championships since they began in 1877.

The ITF World of Tennis (edited by John Barrett, Collins Willow, £12) celebrated its 30th edition this year. Good value, as ever.

John Roberts

Sixth new signing joins Halifax

RUGBY LEAGUE

BY DAVE HADFIELD

FOR HALIFAX, hitting one out of two Wigan targets is not bad. One of the Super League's busiest clubs during the close season had their sights on Darryl Cardiss and Terry O'Connor from last season's champions. Yesterday, they completed the signing of Cardiss, 20, who can play almost anywhere in the backs. The former Great Britain Academy international has played full-back, wing and half-back for Wigan, without commanding a permanent first team place. He becomes the sixth signing for a club which refused to rest on the laurels of last season's top three finish.

But Halifax's hopes of adding O'Connor to their pack have been laid to rest by the Great Britain prop agreeing a contract extension at Central Park. O'Connor still has two years to run on his current contract, but was regarded as available for a move for most of last season.

The late surge of form won him his place at both club and Test level. The extra year added to his current deal will keep him there until he is 29 and will intensify his intentions

for front-row places next season, when Brett Goldspink from St Helens will expand an already healthy range of options.

Wigan's coach, John Monie, is in Australia considering how best to fill their one vacant overseas spot, with Melbourne's Brett Kizunorley one name mentioned in discussions.

The former Great Britain hooker, Lee Jackson, has won the first round of his contest with Terry Newton for that role at Leeds. Newton finished the Test series against New Zealand as his country's hooker, but the Leeds coach, Graham Murray, has signalled his intentions

for 1999 by awarding the squad number 9 to Jackson, who has returned to Britain after a stint with Newcastle Knights in Australia.

Newton is inevitably concerned about his future and has been linked with a possible move to Wigan, his home-town club. Murray has reassured him that he still plays an important part in his plans, although that could be as a utility forward and tactical substitute. The first test of whether the two players can be kept happy will be the Boxing Day friendly against Halifax, who may include Cardiss among their new recruits for the match at Headingley.

Nicol now joins a lengthening list of Bath crocks as they enter a crucial run of away matches. The reigning European champions were already without long-term casualties Jon Preston and Phil de Grawle, as well as the captain, Richard Webster, and hooker Mark Regan who will both be out for a further two weeks.

Nicol in the wars again

RUGBY UNION

BY DAVID LLEWELLYN

But Nicol was still a relieved man last night after leaving hospital following an extensive examination. "The good news is that it is just the medial ligaments that have been damaged and nothing else in the joint," said Nicol. "I should be back by the middle of February."

Lesser men would have thrown in the bloodied towel a long time ago, but the Bath scrum-half has nothing but nickel-plated indifference to injury and pain.

The damage to the left knee is just one more blow in the Scotland scrum-half's sporting career. Indeed, with his medical history he has become something of an expert in rehabilitation. In the last five years Nicol has had his right knee rebuilt, damaged the medial ligaments in his left knee, suffered three awkward hamstring tears and dislocated an elbow. However, he has insisted: "The thought of giving up never entered my head."

■ The Irish Rugby Football Union has confirmed it will not be involved in the British and Irish League proposed for next season.

Return to France '98: England coach stands by his decisions and believes he was a kick away from ultimate success

Hoddle's regrets too few to mention

BY GLENN MOORE
Football Correspondent

THERE IS nothing like a heroic failure to blunt the critic's edge. To go down fighting against all odds strikes such a chord in British hearts that it evokes more admiration than a clinically achieved success.

It is a curious habit and one which has brought succour to many a gallant loser from Jim Peters to Nigel Mansell.

Glen Hoddle's England team were this year's vanquished heroes and, six months on, the memories of summer still bring conflicting emotions. "Not regret, but sadness," said Hoddle when we spoke last week.

This has been a difficult month for the England coach. A dislocated family Christmas is to come, his employers are in turmoil and he has had to endure a series of television programmes raking over England's World Cup defeat to Argentina.

The two remembrances of England's match with Argentina were trying enough, but then had to sit through the BBC's *Sports Review of the Year* - which featured an electronically created shot of David Batty scoring that penalty.

"That was a bit of a shock," he recalled. "I've had very mixed emotions watching all the programmes. In a way they are great to see but it is very hard to sit and watch. The Argentina match was such an amazing game, that's why they made the programmes. If we had got to the final and lost 3-0 they would not be making programmes like that."

Indeed, any such programme in Brazil will, this Christmas, be more recriminatory than celebratory. Here the fact of defeat has been submerged by its nature.

"People remember our game as the best of tournament, like Italy v Brazil in 1982," Hoddle said. "When I've travelled around since people talk about it and say what a great game it was. It has put us in the minds of people overseas."

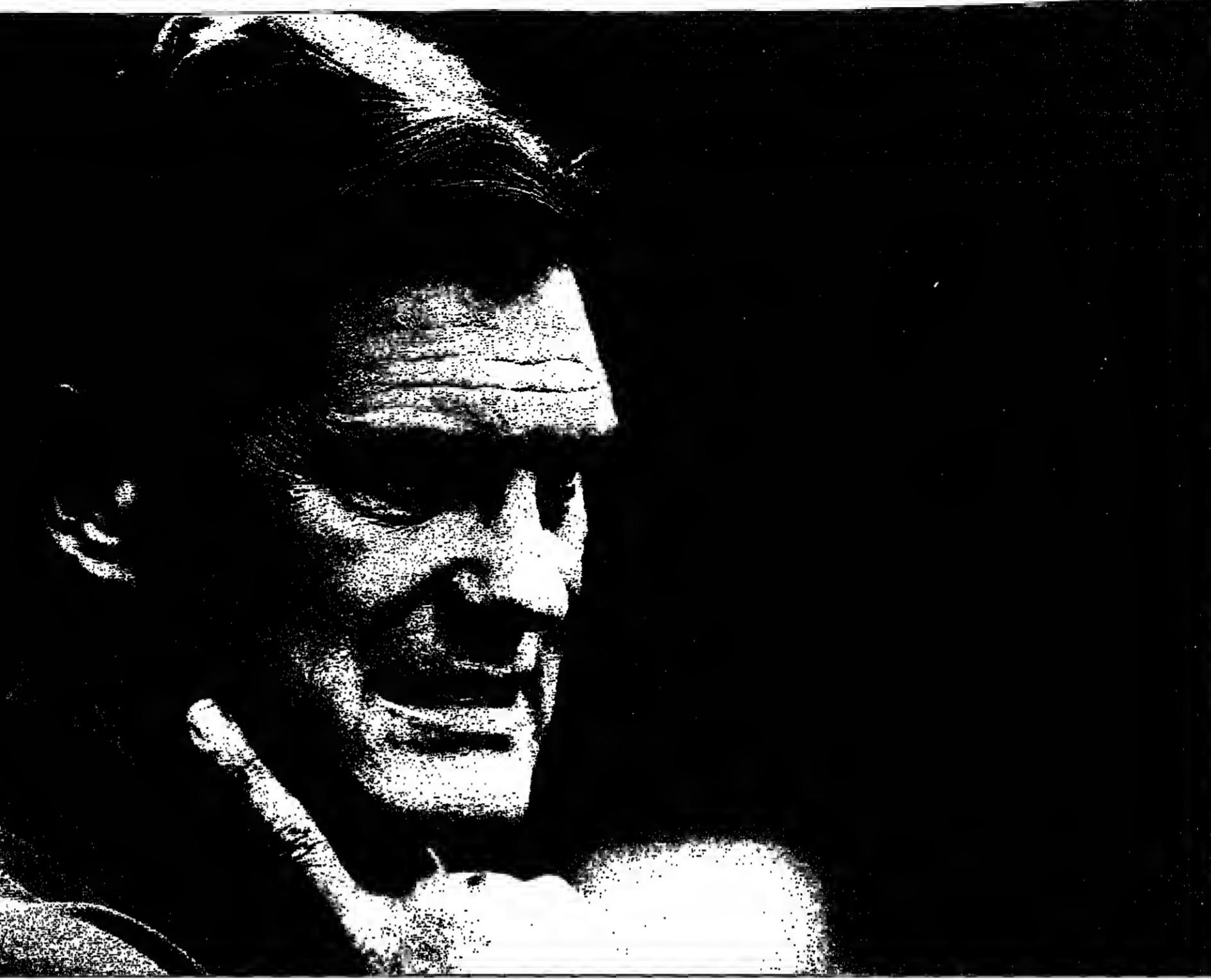
"When you are involved in the match it is difficult to appreciate it, you are focused on the game, but when you see the way it unfolded you realise how epic it was. It's then the emotions kick in. You also see how they got every decision."

The most vivid memory is of Michael Oweo's goal. When an event is seen so often on television the video images can sometimes supplant those of the moment but Hoddle's mental recollection is still the one he saw from the bench. "From the first touch on the thigh, and the way it opened up, we knew immediately there could be something special happening. It was very similar to the way he got the penalty."

Owen's delayed World Cup entrance was one of the most criticised aspects of England's campaign. Hoddle's similar treatment of David Beckham and his choice of penalty-takers are also regarded, by many, as serious errors.

Hoddle remains as unrepentant now as then.

"At the time Becks was not focused. No one who is not working with a group of players can know



That penalty, that diary. Glenn Hoddle has been buffeted by the critics of his performance as England coach but he is proud of that 'epic' encounter with Argentina

Allsport

that. But he's been magnificent this season, the way he has dealt with the problems of the World Cup.

"It was the same with nursing Michael into the tournament. Look what happened to Ronaldo, he's older and more experienced but he couldn't cope with it. I've been there as a player. I know the pressures, it was the right decision."

"As for the penalties. The four defenders were shattered. David Seaman obviously wouldn't take one, so that left five. Batty was fresh, he was positive. It comes to keeping a cool head, I've been there. It's not about practice it's a mental thing, you have to put everything out of your mind and be very positive."

Theo there was the diary. Again, there are no regrets. "Whatever I did there was always going to be someone having a pop. The book is an honest account of what was going through my mind at the time, a lot

of people have said to me it is interesting and a lot have said what a lot of rubbish has been written about it."

"I knew there'd be people looking to have a go. I heard some of them got together beforehand and planned it."

Personally I have no knowledge of such a conspiracy though it is not entirely implausible. That Hoddle believes it suggests an embattled mind and, while he is bullish now, he admits he was very low in the wake of England's exit.

"The two to three weeks afterwards were a really bad time for me.

I wouldn't say I was distraught but I found it very hard. I didn't do much just played with my children. Of course, the first thing my son wanted to do when I got back was play penalty shoot-outs. He said: 'You're David Seaman, I'm Ronaldo.' It was probably the best thing. If you had written a script, it would have been the perfect ending."

Hoddle had been due to return to France to cover a quarter-final match for television but pulled out. "I said I can't face it! but I went to the semi-final in Marseilles."

This match, between Brazil and the Netherlands, also went to penalties and Hoddle said: "I wasn't looking forward to it but it was a bit like the hair of the dog. It got me further down the line. You never really get it out of your system but it helped."

"I don't look back on the tournament with regret. It is more a sense of sadness. If we had won that game, and we were so close, the belief in camp would have been such that we could have gone all the way."

This, then, is much as expected. No regrets, just a belief that, despite

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SPORT

GLENN HODDLE REFLECTS P24 • KING EDWARDS IN HIS PRIME P21

THE INDEPENDENT
Tuesday 22 December 1998



BY GLE
Football

THERE are to be downing such a c it evoke clinical. It is which h a gallan Nigel M Glen were thi and, six of sum emotion said EC week.

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Di Canio disputes suspension

PAOLO DI CANIO yesterday appealed to the Premier League against a two-week suspension imposed upon him by Sheffield Wednesday.

Di Canio is now nine days overdue from a period of compassionate leave - he was allowed home to bring his wife, Elisabetta, and baby daughter back to England. The 30-year-old striker's non-appearance led to Wednesday suspending him for 14 days without pay from 12 December, a ruling which has infuriated Di Canio.

FOOTBALL

BY IAN PARKES

Wednesday's secretary, Graham Mackrell, said: "I understand from the Premier League he has appealed against the imposition of our suspension for his failure to report back."

Di Canio would be eligible to return in Saturday's home match against Leicester after an 11-game suspension for his shove on referee Paul Alcock.

Wednesday are threatening to place Di Canio on the transfer list as he remains incomunicado in his wife's home town of Terl, near Rome. The striker's agent, Moreno Roggi, has since said Di Canio is suffering from stress and depression and is unlikely to fly back until 4 January at the earliest. He said a doctor's certificate verifies the illness, leaving Wednesday with no grounds to enforce the suspension.

Mackrell said: "I think we can now assume he will not be available for our game on Box-

ing Day and will remain in Italy for the time being. We are hoping he will return but any suggestion of us flying out to talk to him are out of the question. He is a contracted employee of Sheffield Wednesday Football Club and we are entitled to expect him to work."

A hearing will be held next month, with the relationship between club and player almost at breaking point. Di Canio has already been fined a staggering £78,000 by the club and the Football Association, added to

which were the £12,000 in legal costs for his disciplinary commission hearing.

The referee Paul Durkin, who sent off Arsenal's Gilles Grimandi during the Gunners' victory over Leeds on Sunday, has dismissed the Frenchman's claims that he did not head-hunt Leeds' Alan Smith. Durkin said: "I'm not even contemplating changing my mind."

Grimandi declared his intention to appeal after becoming the fifth Arsenal player to be sent off this season.

"I never touched the other player with my head and I would like the authorities to look at my case," Grimandi said.

"There was a foul on me in the first place. All I did was put my head forward to let the other player know I was not happy about the foul. I honestly did not make any contact. I have never done that in my life, not hit someone else with my head."

"At first I thought the referee was going to show me the yellow card and I did not think that was fair. When he pulled out the

red card, I could not believe it," Grimandi said.

Arsenal's manager, Arsène Wenger, joined Grimandi's defence, saying: "Grimandi was badly fouled two or three times. And then the guy stamped on him before he was sent off."

But Wenger added that his defender was ill-judged in his reaction. "Grimandi made a movement of head-butting him but didn't touch him. It was a bad reaction. He shouldn't have done it," he said.

Return to France '98, page 24

Honda heads back to F1 fray

MOTOR RACING

HONDA MOTORS announced in Tokyo yesterday that it plans to return to the Formula One circuit with a full racing team in 2000, marking the end of an eight-year absence from the sport its engines once dominated.

The Honda president, Hiroyuki Yoshino, told reporters that a comprehensive team, using its own engine, chassis and management, would begin full-scale testing early next year with an eye on the 2000 championship.

The new team means Honda's approach will be similar to that of the Italian constructor, Ferrari, which manages its own team as well as making its own engines and chassis. Other major car makers on the circuit supply their engines for independent racing teams to use.

Honda had announced its intention to return to the track earlier this year but had given no date for its comeback, which has been the subject of much speculation in the Japanese sports press.

Yoshino said that many of Honda's engineers joined the company out of an interest in F1 racing and that the return would give a healthy boost to morale.

He doubted that the company would be able to win the championship during its first year back on the circuit, although it hoped to be a viable contender within three years.

Honda took part in F1 racing as a full team between 1964 and 1968, winning two out of 35 races.

However the manufacturer shot to prominence in the sport in the late 1980s and early 1990s when it dominated the constructors' championship, winning the title a record six consecutive years until 1991.

Honda withdrew from motor racing after the completion of the 1992 circuit, stating that it had achieved its objectives in the sport.

Said Mu up.

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JUL 11 1998

TUESDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • LISTINGS • TELEVISION



Kevin Larmer

BY BERYL BAINBRIDGE

I said, 'Mummy, what's it like to be old?' She said, 'Inside, I'm still 25.' Then her eyes filled up and a drop of water fell down her cheek. Two weeks later she died, alone

And now I am old

Thirty years ago, my mother travelled up from Liverpool to stay with me, something she did every four months or so. It was winter and she wore her beaver fur coat, a garment so heavy in weight that she tottered under its load. Every time her taxi halted outside, I ran to the door with love and pleasure in my heart. An hour or so later, the feeling had evaporated and I wondered how I would get through the next four days, not because the love had gone but rather that it was blocked up: stemmed by circumstances.

Nothing either of us did, or expected, hit the right note. I hadn't the proper cutlery; my hair needed cutting, perming; the curtains needed washing; the children were lovely but that was accidental rather than a matter of upbringing. She always brought her ballgown, although she knew it was beyond the dreams of avarice that we'd be going to such an outlandish event; she didn't notice the clean sheets on her bed; she played Rummy with the children and openly cheated; she said her lamb chop was overcooked. When I moved too swiftly, the tulle on her ballgown, hung from the top shelf of the bookcase, billowed out in reproach. Perhaps you can only really love your parents when you're little - dependent. Later on, it's adult versus adult.

Two days later we went to Brown's Hotel for coffee because she liked going to posh places. I couldn't really afford it, but I used the child allowance. If I'd have said I was short of money she'd have told me to come home. The day before she'd taken a bus to the Hilton in Park Lane, bought a newspaper, and insisted it be put in a carrier bag imprinted with the name of the hotel. When she got home she flashed the bag and boasted of how a gentleman caller had taken her out for tea.

We sat there in Brown's talking of this and that. Yes, the floral displays were very nice; I might have a book published soon, maybe, nothing definite; the editor was rumoured to be having a breakdown. Her bridge partner, Minnie, had thrown a wobbler at the Wine Tasting Night; my brother Ian was doing very well in his law practice in Montgomery. He was up for Mayor: Tommy Sutton was on the way out... stomach troubles; she blamed the cow, hidden outside the kitchen window. Did I remember Charlie White and that night the hay fork had gone up his nose?

I could tell by the look in her eyes that my hair was too lank. God knows, if we hadn't been related we'd have had nothing in common. Then, I said, out of nowhere, only out really, because I wanted to hurt her because she was hurting me: 'Mummy, what's it like to be old?'

I didn't know her age; it was a closely guarded secret. Now I think she would have appeared to be in her early sixties; in reality she was 71, had a dicky heart and a show-off personality, the latter trait, having no outlet, she shuffled on to me.

There was a man in Brown's, at the next table, who had something wrong with his leg. He kept bending down and scratching. I was watching him when my mother made a funny sound, and when I looked at her I saw her eyes had changed. She was really concentrating on me, as if I was really there. For a second she was not my mother but someone real, someone outside of me.

She said, 'Inside, I'm still 25', and her mouth worked as though she wanted to tell me something else, but no words came. Then her eyes filled up and a drop of water slid down her cheek and splashed on to that wretched fur coat; it hung a moment - I watched it - and soaked away. Two weeks later she died, alone, her teeth under the pillow and £3 in her handbag and her world.

I saw her dead in the Chapel of Rest in Formby, Lancashire. She was lying down in what looked like one half of a cardboard Easter egg with a paper frill all round. Her nail varnish was chipped, and when I kissed her she was so icy, so hard, that the tear I dropped on to her cheek bounced off on to the floor.

I've been more fortunate than my mother. She was a product of the early part of the century, a time when women relied on men for financial support, for status, for a reason for their existence, in that they were the bearer of children and the keeper of the home. In my youth, if you weren't engaged before you were 20, there was obviously something wrong: you were destined for the shelf.

Somewhat dusty, I got married at 21, and two years later Colin Wilso wrote *The Outsider*, a book about how the artist must be free - my husband was a painter, on canvas rather than walls - and after reading it, though I expect there were other pressures, not to mention my immaturity, he walked out. Not financially - that's the difference between then and now. He gave me a house, all the furniture and £7.10 shillings a week maintenance, a provision so generous that the divorce courts thought there was some kind of collusion.

Once he'd gone, I started to write more diligently, though not with the idea that I'd make any money. In those days filthily lucre was an extraordinary, miraculous by-product of creative activity. The years passed, books got published, my daughters and son grew up, left home and had children of their own.

And now I'm old. One hundred years ago, 50 even, a woman of my age, 64, would have been considered ancient. I dye my hair, as did my mum, but the dyes have improved; have five false teeth - my Mum had not a single real tooth in her head beyond her 19th year; liver spots on the back of my hands; wrinkles; and a tendency to ask for a drop of brandy without

the slightest feeling of faintness. Two hours after getting up, I feel tired and am apt to doze off while watching television, but I can work, if writing can be called that, into the small hours of the night. I believe the brain is like a muscle, which atrophies if it isn't exercised. My mum may have thought she was 25 in her head, but that was because it was then that she stopped being curious, introspective. Her fault, bless her, was just that she let life get the boot in. Also, she'd run out of money.

In my case, the one drawback to growing old is the inescapable knowledge that it leads to the grave, although I have been anticipating such a trip for the last 30 years. As all my relatives kicked the bucket from cardiac arrest around the age of 70, I reckon I now have about six years to go, which is a pity because a dicky heart makes for a swift exit and I would much prefer to linger, pencilling last notes and murmuring farewells.

Best, before vanishing on to that darkling plain, it would be satisfying to recite those lines, however inaccurately, of the poet Matthew Arnold: *Ah, love, let us be true to one another... for the world that seems to lie before us like a land of dreams, hath neither truth, nor hope, nor certainty...*

THE INDEPENDENT CHRISTMAS APPEAL

YES I would like to support
The Independent Christmas Appeal

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CALL NOW

Freephone 0800 00 99 66

Lines open every day, 7am - 7pm

Alternatively, enclose a Cheque Postal Order/CAF Voucher (delete as appropriate) for £____ made payable to The Independent Christmas Appeal

Name _____ Address _____ Postcode _____

Please post this form with your cheque/postal order/CAF voucher to:

The Independent Christmas Appeal, Age Concern England, Freepost 4084, London, SW16 4TY.

England will distribute in equal shares 20% of all funds raised to St Christopher's Hospice and Action on Elder Abuse (all registered charities).

Please Note: From time to time, Age Concern England would like to allow other charitable organizations to write to its supporters. If you do not want to be contacted by other such organizations, please tick this box.

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MEDIA

AGE CONCERN
ACTION ON ELDER
ABUSE

Iraq's Blitz spirit
Sir: The hope that the bombing of Iraq will provoke the Iraqis to rise against their leader seems to me to be ludicrous.

My experience of being bombed during the Second World War (I was stationed in London during the Blitz and the attacks by V1 and V2 missiles) did not make me want to throw out Winston Churchill – quite the opposite. But it did give me a profound and increasing dislike of the perpetrators of the bombings, namely the Nazis.

Why should the Iraqis be different?

Dr J AUDREY STEVENSON
Darsham, Suffolk

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Sir: Would all the critics of the action taken against Saddam Hussein please come up with a better solution? I still see in my mind's eye the bloated corpses of women, children and men gassed because they were Kurds.

VIVIANE HASELUP
Burwash, East Sussex

YAS
Sanctions are neither illegal nor
immoral; Saddam is, and his
weaponry and use of it are both. He
used it to wipe out the Marsh
Arabs in southern Iraq and his
opponents elsewhere.

Your Iraqi academics ask for "a
new strategy aimed at helping the
Iraqi people to induce real
change in Iraq". Can they suggest
what is needed?

I A SHAPIRO
Birmingham

SHAPI
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Arabs in southern Iraq and his
opponents elsewhere.

Sir: We could consider doing what
we have done with another equally
odious type, in Indonesia. That is,
we could supply him with ethical
bombing aircraft and water
cannon and in due course invite
him to the annual sale of weapons
by our own MoD. Oh, and in
case he is not able to pay for
them, we could pass the bill to
the British taxpayer.

HOWARD CHENEY
Shipston on Stour, Warwickshire

CHENE
Sanctions are neither illegal nor
immoral; Saddam is, and his
weaponry and use of it are both. He
used it to wipe out the Marsh
Arabs in southern Iraq and his
opponents elsewhere.

Sir: What message of condolence
do ministers plan to send to
families of the bereaved in Iraq?

Even suffering under the
inhuman regime is surely better than being
killed or maimed for life by British
or US bombs.

Let us not forget that this
country and our weapons

industries armed the brutal
dictatorship of Saddam Hussein in
the first place, as the Scott Inquiry
laid bare. And not a single Tory
minister found it necessary to
resign over it.

Dr DAVID LOWRY
Stoneleigh, Surrey

LOWR
Sanctions are neither illegal nor
immoral; Saddam is, and his
weaponry and use of it are both. He
used it to wipe out the Marsh
Arabs in southern Iraq and his
opponents elsewhere.

Sir: Having just read about
Britain's latest policy towards Iraq,
I suggest that Tony Blair
commission a new "tough and
tender" bomb. Such a bomb would

carry food and medicines as well
as the more traditional destructive
warhead. Both the humanitarian
and the military destinations

would be programmed into the
missile, which could then make a
detour around any local hospitals

BLA
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Sir: All the people of Ireland
approved the Good Friday
Agreement, including the
section on decommissioning, in
separate referenda. What
extraordinary arrogance on
the part of Mr Plowden (letter,
17 December) to suggest that it
should now be changed.

E WATSON
Toronto, Canada

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opponents elsewhere.

Sir: In fact called for a 4-per-

cent, not 40-per-cent, tax on the
225 richest people in the world

(Podium, 11 December).

Though, assuredly, you could

do a great deal more with the
higher levy. These billionaires

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(Podium, 11 December).

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IN BRIEF

have a combined wealth of

more than 1 trillion dollars.

The UN Development

Programme estimates that the

cost of maintaining universal

basic education, health care,

reproductive health care for

women and adequate food and

safe water for all, would be

\$40bn a year. That is less than a

4-per-cent tax on the 225.

KEN COATES MEP
(Nottingham North and
Chesterfield, Ind Lab)

Mansfield, Nottinghamshire

Nottinghamshire

Luxembourg

Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire

London WC1

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KEN COATES MEP
(Nottingham North and
Chesterfield, Ind Lab)

Mansfield, Nottinghamshire



PANDORA

MOHAMED AL-FAYED likes to send his friends, particularly his journalist contacts, cuddly Harrods teddy bears. This Christmas season, some were dispatched to *The Guardian*, but rumours quickly began circulating around the paper's Farringdon Road offices to the effect that the editors expected hacks to return them to al-Fayed or donate them to charity. When Pandora rang to check out the truth of the matter, a newspaper spokesman said: "It has been suggested by our managing editor, Brian Whitaker, that the bears be donated to charity. A children's hospital perhaps. It hasn't been decided yet. We feel that the recipients of this should be children rather than *Guardian* employees. We certainly wouldn't send them back. That would be stupid and insulting."

KENNETH CLARKE, the former Tory chancellor and health secretary, has written an unusually glowing tribute in praise of Romola Christopherson, who is retiring after a distinguished career as the Department of Health's press officer.

"I think that I enjoyed every job that I had in government," Clarke writes to the Health Service's staff magazine, "but there were few things that were more fun than working with Romola Christopherson."

"We were probably the last ever secretary of state and press officer to smoke ourselves heavily through every crisis!"

Mr Clarke should be careful. A confession like that could put him – and Romola – into serious jeopardy should they ever need treatment at certain puritanical health authorities.

THE NORTHERN Ireland Assembly has opened a new gift shop, but before the recess began yesterday, the only merchandise available was confectionery – all emblazoned with the lovely flax flower, the assembly's logo. (Readers will recall that this logo was first revealed by Pandora on 15 October.) On offer have been toffees, something called "midget gems", humbugs and fudge. Pandora hopes the shop will sell out of the latter two products before the assembly embarks on its next session.

THE IN & OUT is moving out. Umbrellas furled tightly, pinstripes pressed sharply, members of the Naval & Military Club will pass in and out of its famous Piccadilly driveway for the final time tomorrow. The lease on the 135-year-old club's landmark Mayfair headquarters has expired, but happily the club has found a new home nearby at 4 St James's Square.

As the new clubhouse is considerably smaller, Bonhams will conduct an auction on 21 January back at 94 Piccadilly for what the organisation describes as "some of the club's and the members' finest antiques".

ON BROADWAY, celebrity couples are flocking to see *The Blue Room* in which, as the *NY Daily News* puts it: "Nicole Kidman and Iain Glen do things on stage that Mayor Giuliani has banned elsewhere around Times Square."

In recent days, Winona Ryder and Matt Damon, Ethan Hawke and Uma Thurman, and Michael Douglas and his new *NY Times* columnist girlfriend Maureen Dowd, have all been to see the stimulating drama. So far, however, no sign of Bill and Hillary.

HOW DO the Brits rank in the US gossip stakes, where celebrity-worship is now the national religion? In its list based on "mentions" in a wide range of NY and national gossip columns, the *New York Observer* provides an intriguing ranking of the 500 most media-popular people, both living and deceased.

The highest ranking Brit is, unsurprisingly, the late Diana, Princess of Wales, at No 12, while the next entrant, at No 66, is the actress Minnie Driver. In the top 100, she is followed by the journalist Tina Brown (76), the actress

Kate Winslet (90) and Mick Jagger and Uma Thurman (tied at 100). Thereafter come Elizabeth Hurley (111), Natasha Richardson and Anna Wintour (tied at 120), Kate Moss (124), Helena Bonham-Carter (152) and, finally, the Prime Minister, Tony Blair (180). Lest he feel disgruntled about this (President Clinton is, after all, ranked No 1), this placing puts Tony in a dead heat with the likes of the Rolling Stones, Judi Dench, Whoopi Goldberg and Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Do the Iraqis like our gifts, Daddy?



TERENCE BLACKER

Cruise missiles are nice, Christmassy weapons; they sound like something from a holiday brochure

him, he said this horrid man is not just a danger to his own people but also to his neighbours. In fact, he wants nothing less than world domination."

"How would he do that, Daddy?"

"We're not quite sure, but we do know that he's very ruthless. He's got these things called 'weapons of mass destruction'."

"Not like our cruise missiles?"

"Goodness me, no. Cruise missiles are nice, Christmassy weapons. They have been specially designed not to harm innocent civilians. They even sound nice, don't they? Like something from a holiday brochure."

"Because it would be really unfair if we ended up killing and maiming women and children and old men at Christmas time. I'm so glad we didn't do that."

"So am I. In fact, the only civilians who were killed were those who got in the way – and we really can't be blamed for that. Our bombs may be smart but they aren't geniuses. And, you know, just to make it all better for the people we were bombing, Tony Blair said that our quarrel wasn't with them personally but with their horrible leader. So, to show how sincere he was, he stopped destroying their country in time for their religious holiday. It was a sort of Christmas present from us to them."

"How would he do that, Daddy?"

"Our teacher says that the Christmas message is not just about Jesus. It's about everyday life."

"And will all the little children gather round, Daddy?"

"Almost all the little children. Those that have been very naughty have had to be locked up in our first

prison for children down in Kent. They'll be getting a yuletide cuff round the ear from the Group Four security guards who have been told to use 'basic and advanced control techniques' if the 10- and 11-year-olds don't get into an appropriate Christmas spirit."

"Giving to others and praying?"

"That, of course. But the on-message Christmas spirit involves bolstering the enterprise culture by spending as much money as possible, getting good and bloated on the day and then worrying a bit about those less fortunate than blah-dilah-dilah as we digest our Christmas dinners."

"So is it really true that all our leaders are getting holier and nicer and more caring?"

"Why yes, son. I do believe it is."

"That would explain why someone on the telly was saying that most of the people working for Western governments have spent much of the last year or so on their knees. There was a man called Davies on Clapham Common and, in the White House, there was a lady called..."

"Yes. Now where did we put those mince pies?"

A plague of corruption and cronyism is ruining my land



ANWAR IBRAHIM

Modern dictators are no different from the old colonial masters who carted away our riches

tated by a leadership intolerant of criticism. As often happens under despotic and dictatorial regimes, Mahathir's government tries to deflect attention from the real issues by creating foreign bogeys and portraying its critics as traitors. Patriotism is given a new meaning, instead of willingness to sacrifice for love of country, it is equated with unquestioning loyalty to the ruling élite.

Citizens not only must be accorded these fundamental liberties; they must also be made aware of them. So basic education must do more than merely equip students with marketable skills. It must nurture young people so they may become adequate participants in a democracy. A free press plays a fundamental role. All the traditional cultures teach us that truth will eventually destroy falsehood. But this can happen only in an environment where debate is robust, where people are not only allowed but encouraged to speak without fear. A controlled press is anathema to this ideal.

In this regard, Malaysia is still a long way from being a civil society. The people's constitutional rights are often violated by the executive. Valiant efforts by non-governmental organisations and other civic groups to redress the problems are frus-

tating all the strings. Legislators, regardless of their party affiliation, should be committed to upholding the people's constitutional rights and freedoms. Might is not always right. The actions of key executive organs of government, such as the police and the office of the attorney-general, ought to be under constant parliamentary scrutiny.

There cannot be an Asian renaissance without social and economic justice. Economic progress has meaning only when the majority of the people enjoy its fruits. Under Mahathir's grandiose economic programme, important issues such as hard-core poverty, the safety of working conditions and the availability of basic housing are dealt with only at the periphery.

Naturally, we will not see social and economic justice until we see the end of cronyism and nepotism. In Malaysia, a select and selfish few have appropriated the lion's share of the wealth generated by economic development. What was meant to be affirmative action has turned into a system of corruption and favouritism. Projects and contracts are won on the basis of whom you know, not what you know. The handful of people who keep getting the largess continue to get richer at the expense of others. Cronyism breeds nepotism and corruption. It is a vicious circle.

Affirmative action... is, in fact, essential in redressing economic imbalances that were the result of decades of social mismanagement. But, in practice, the selfish exploitation of this intrinsically noble effort at social engineering has been developed into a fine art. It is used to further the interests of a handful of bumipura, or indigenous Malay cronies, acting for themselves and, sometimes, for non-bumipura cronies, all at the expense of the majority.

For Malaysia to progress into a

civil society, fundamental social, political and economic reform is a sine qua non. All over South-east Asia we see the political landscape changing – with an awareness of the need for democracy and civil society growing, especially among the young.

The reform movement which I launched on 12 September seeks to establish justice for all and preserve the institutions and processes of law from graft and abuse of power. It advocates fairness in economic distribution and seeks to eradicate graft and manipulation of the economy. The movement cuts across ethnic, cultural and religious divides.

While we seek to reinforce a dynamic Malaysian cultural identity, we must constantly guard against jingoistic tendencies and encourage openness to the world, that is based on

the principles of truth and justice.

I am blessed to have known so many good people all over the world. Their outpouring of sympathy, prayer and encouragement is a source of great comfort, not unlike the cool morning breeze now blowing through my small window.

In a few minutes, it will be time for the dawn prayer. As the plaintive sound of the azan, the call to prayer, pierces through the silence, I see the breaking of dawn where "yon grey messengers of day", and I tell myself that God willing, a new day will soon dawn for Malaysia.

The author, the former deputy prime minister of Malaysia, is awaiting trial on charges of immorality. © 1998, Newsweek Inc



Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad

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I WAS involved in the Rotterdam 2045 project, a project that included the opportunity to develop concrete design proposals for the city in the next millennium. These designs were used to open the discussion on the character of the city as a whole. Design as a political tool.

The crisis of the makeable society is being discussed everywhere. In the meantime, we carry on creating, making, building and planning. The end of the makeability sometimes seems to be only a defeatist thought, not real. Nevertheless, this question is very real in Rotterdam.

If there is one place where, after the war, a lot has been visibly achieved, where "producing an achievement" was considered the greatest value, then it is Rotterdam. Only those who, in the late Forties, after having left the Central Station, stood on the edge of the plain of Rotterdam, can understand what has been achieved here.

Nowhere else was work done so purposefully and with such concrete goals. Nowhere else was construction so much

connected with belief in the future. And nowhere else did you know so precisely what your future was going to be.

At present, there is no other place where the problem of the future is as tangible as in Rotterdam. This is no abstract and philosophical problem. The project of turning nothing into something has been more or less completed. The Kop van Zuid, one could say, is the last great effort that has its origins in the Thought of Reconstruction.

This is a precious cliché: the Rotterdammer rolled up his sleeves and put his shoulders to the wheel. But we find ourselves at a turning-point with possibly far-reaching psychological consequences. How can you preserve the charm of the morale from the time of the reconstruction now the city has been rebuilt, when there is no clear goal, no more consensus on the strategy, no ethical framework in which big groups can find each other?

The doubtful luxury of the zero point of the bombardment definitely belongs to the past. There is now talk of an optimal situation as the starting point. There is a transition

from growth and making, to maintenance and management. Obviously, building activities will continue, as in any other big city. However, this will not be comparable with filling the post-war tabula rasa. This is a far less illustrious destiny, with many more doubts. How does one remain enthusiastic then? Isn't the maintenance of the existing a size too small for

the real Rotterdammer? Luckily, some will say, there is still the port; this symbol of growth, regeneration and international status. The spirit of Rotterdam will, no matter how, survive in the port, if only in the constantly increasing transhipment. As long as the port is growing, energy and inspiration can find a way out.

In this version of the future, the city is reduced to an economic unit. The port as the essence of Rotterdam means a materialistic view of the world, in which business and international orientation are the main elements. But this also immediately indicates the vulnerability of this image. Because, according to both the idea of world-wide free trade, and to the opposite model of protectionism, Rotterdam as a port will have to do its very best. Moreover, it is not yet at all clear to what extent the future port will have anything to do with the city.

At the non-material level there are also all kinds of developments that can put the port into perspective. What is advantageous for the port does not necessarily have to be good for Rotterdam. Similarly, what is disadvantageous for Rotterdam does not necessarily have to be bad for the country.

Rotterdam, as a large urban conurbation, deals with the tendencies occurring in Europe and in the world. There is an increasing pressure on industrial activities, in particular in the countries of Western Europe. The growth of the tertiary and quaternary sectors is enormous, and this has far-reaching consequences for a city like Rotterdam. Migration, mobility and environment require the necessary attention. Due to the advance of the flexible capital we are witnessing how scale and territory, of geographically bound powers and material products, are being put into perspective.

These kinds of ambiguities make thinking about the future of the port, the city and the region so interesting. Rotterdam is thus an exemplary model for the future of the metropolis, which can teach everybody a lot. The project concerns Rotterdam, which in the future must also continue to offer a lot as a special social network, as an economic engine, as a fine example of physical planning.



PODIUM

OLE BOUMAN
From a speech by the editor of the Dutch architecture magazine 'Archis' at the Riba conference 'Cities in the Millennium'

transform any size of disposable drink bottle into a wild bird feeder and waterer - the 1 litre size is ideal.

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the real Rotterdammer? Luckily, some will say, there is still the port; this symbol of growth, regeneration and international status. The spirit of Rotterdam

From Johnson to Clinton



GODFREY HODGSON

Never has the United States' political system been more hell-bent on self-destruction

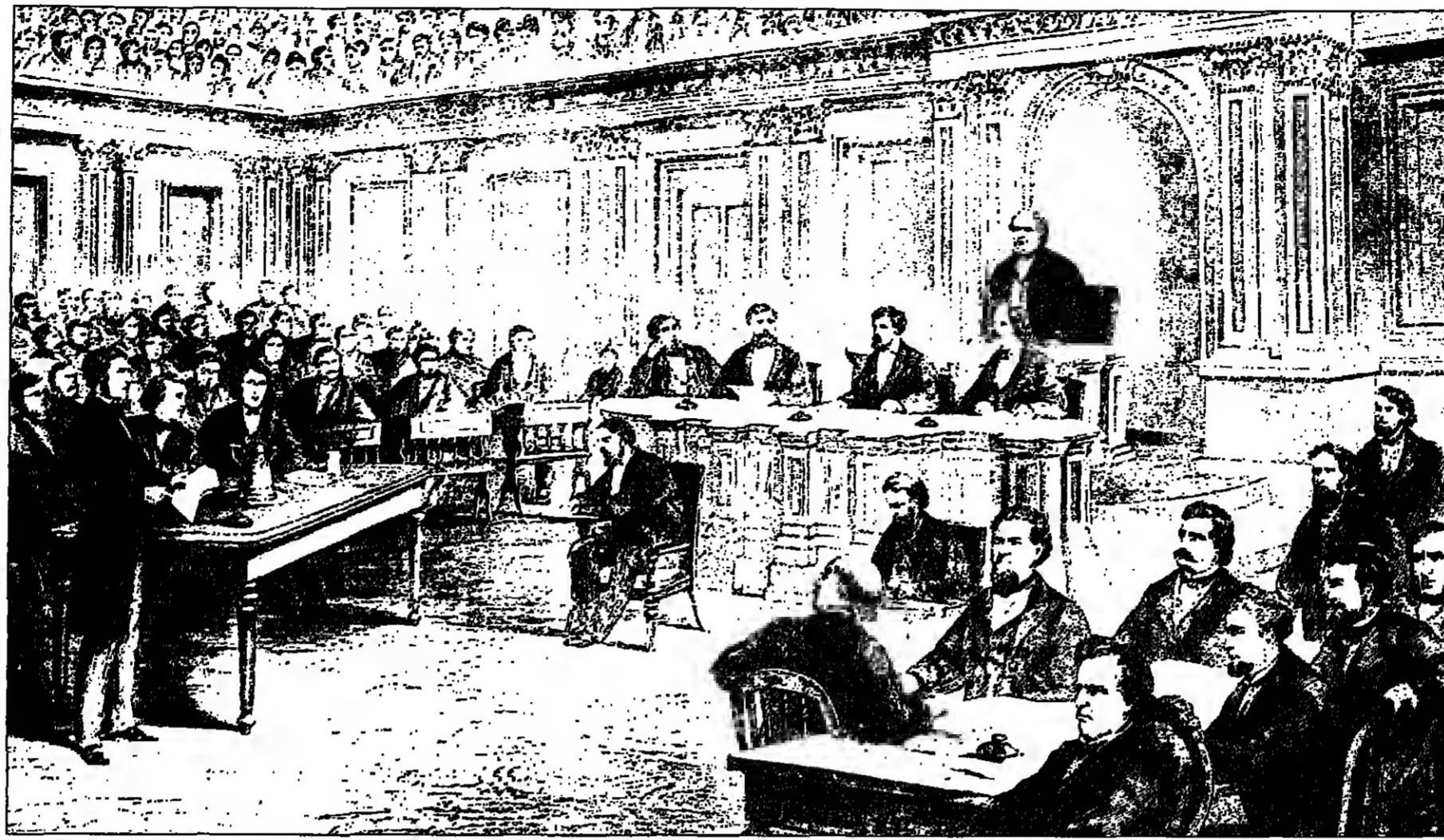
ONLY A fool would try to predict the outcome of President Clinton's trial by the Senate, which will start in the New Year. All that can sensibly be said is that, if time and again the President has made a come-back, time and again his relentless Republican pursuers have gone after him and prevented him escaping into the long grass.

Whatever happens, the President's impeachment is a crisis for American government and society of the first magnitude. It is both dramatic evidence of how bitter American politics has become and an ominous indication of how divisions are likely to deepen. Historically, the civil rights legislation of the Sixties destroyed the Democratic coalition of northern liberals and southern conservatives, leaving the two sides ideologically divided as never before.

This is not, as one London tabloid called it, a "sex trial". It is a grave constitutional crisis and it will turn not on the American public's attitude to sexual morality but on the Senate's judgment about whether the President perjured himself and abused his oath of office.

When the Senate sits on the impeachment resolutions, its presiding officer will be the Chief Justice, William Rehnquist. That is not good news for President Clinton, for Rehnquist is an ultra-conservative, originally a supporter of Senator Barry Goldwater, who ran unsuccessfully for the White House as a conservative in 1964, and a nominee and supporter of Richard Nixon, who resigned rather than face impeachment in 1974.

As it happens, the Chief Justice published in 1992 a scholarly study of the impeachment process and, in particular, of the impeachment trials of Chief Justice Samuel Chase in 1805 and President Andrew Johnson in 1868. In his book Rehnquist makes some points about the Nixon case that have ironic resonances today. He points out that, in 1974, members of the House of Representatives judiciary committee (the majority of course then Democrats) rejected the view advanced today by some Democrats in Clinton's defence that the "high crimes and misdemeanours" for which, according to the constitution, a pres-



The impeachment hearings of President Andrew Johnson in the Senate Chambers in 1868

ident can be removed must be indictable offences under criminal law.

The key to what is happening in Washington now is again the rage and frustration felt by the activist conservative Republicans because they think they are being robbed of the fruits of their victory. They thought there had been a Reagan Revolution, with the liberals co-founded and conservatives in the saddle for the next generation at least. Then they had to put up with George Bush, just the kind of moderate Republican they dislike more even than liberals.

In 1994 they offered their "Contract with America" and won a smashing victory under Newt Gingrich, capturing both houses of Congress for the first time for two generations - only to see Bill Clinton pop up again in 1996. They managed to get an arch conservative, Kenneth Starr, appointed as special prosecutor to investigate first the Clintons' financial dealings in Arkansas, and then anything that might be thrown at them. But, after spending \$40m, Starr came up with nothing.

Clinton won the 1996 election. Imagine the congressional Republicans' thrill when they learned that their enemy had not only not recklessly meeting a young intern for sexual trysts in the White House but had been foolish enough to lie on oath, and on television, about it. Clinton repeated his lie and was

caught out, in part thanks to unscrupulous prosecutorial manoeuvres by Starr and his bloodhounds. Once again the radical Republicans thought they had got their man, and once again, in the mid-term elections last month, he slipped away.

The strain has been telling on the Republicans. Newt Gingrich suffered a clumsy, abortive coup last July, only to be forced to resign after the party's poor performance in November. Now his successor, Robert Livingston, has resigned after admitting that he, too, had strayed from the marriage bed. To lose two speakers in a month argues a certain carelessness, or a certain desperation. But they closed ranks, voted the straight party line and pushed through impeachment.

What happens now? There are 55 Republicans in the Senate and only 45 Democrats. But conviction on an impeachment requires a two-thirds vote. On the face of it, that would seem to mean that the Republicans are unlikely to get the 67 votes they need, apart from anything else, they cannot be sure of every last Republican senator's vote.

Nothing that has happened since the Lewinsky scandal first broke, however, encourages confident linear prediction. The Senate trial will be the focus of the most intense media feeding frenzy that is imaginable. The Republicans are desperate not to see their prey escape

yet again. The Democrats, however, are not so united.

Public support for President Clinton remains at a high level, and has even risen since he was impeached. But conservative Republicans are not as interested in public opinion as they are in the wishes of their ideologically passionate activists and financial backers.

There has been much talk in Washington of deals, and plea-bargaining comes naturally to American lawyers, which is what many members of the Senate are. In theory, the Senate can do what it likes. It can decide, by a simple majority vote, not to proceed with the trial. It can decide whether or not to hear witnesses and if so whether to bar them in public or in camera.

The Senate could certainly vote to censure the President, with or without a fine, perhaps requiring him to sign his own condemnation. Censure, however, is what the President's defenders want, and for that reason alone it would feel like yet another humiliating frustration for his pursuers.

My own hunch is that the debate in the Senate will go the whole way, and the final vote will not come before extraordinary dramas and manoeuvres. There are several influential Democratic senators who are outraged by the President's behaviour. They feel he has let them, their party and the country

down. Some or all of them might come out for impeachment. Or, at the last minute, they might orchestrate a movement for some compromise that could not be dismissed as a slap on the wrist - though it is not easy to imagine what that could be.

The next three months will see unprecedented passions and unpredictable events. It will all be great fun. It will also be bad news for the United States and therefore for the rest of us. Both the presidency and the Congress will emerge from the crisis, whatever happens, with their reputations damaged, and so in a sense will the American system.

Never has the US exerted more influence, even hegemony, than now; never has its domestic political system been more hell-bent on self-destruction. America is a strong society, and its institutions are tougher than they sometimes look. It remains to be seen how they will cope with the new media, for whom nothing is sacred, and with the new politics, by which angry ideologically conservative Republicans, slug it out with angry, ideologically liberal Democrats, with the rules even rougher than they were for fighting in the old Arkansas river ports, where everything was allowed but for biting, gouging and bollocking.

Hamish McRae's weekly column will appear tomorrow

RIGHT OF REPLY

DR NICHOLAS TATE



The chief executive of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority replies to recent criticisms of the National Curriculum tests

IN THE early 1990s there were valid criticisms of the national tests. They focused on the reliability of the tests, the information they provided, and the possibility of cheating. However, problems in all these areas have been successfully tackled and criticisms along these lines are now outdated.

Each question in the tests is now rigorously pre-tested to pitch it at the correct level. So, too, are the papers, which are anchored to the previous year's standard. Radical changes to the tests are avoided, and any necessary changes are carefully piloted before introduction. The tests are now among the most carefully developed school exams in the world.

The tests provide far more detailed information than simply a test mark. All papers are sent back to the schools after marking, so that teachers can see exactly where mistakes were made. The QCA analyses the completed papers, and publishes a report setting out strengths and weaknesses of performance.

As for cheating, schools are not allowed to open test paper packs until an hour before the test starts. During the test, random schools received an unscheduled visit to check administration arrangements; in only a few cases was there evidence of malpractice.

The tests are making a major contribution to improving the quality of education. They may not measure everything that is worth learning, but they are a measure of progress in the core curriculum elements. They provide diagnostic information; they hold schools accountable; they enable us to set targets. One of the main levers in the crusade to raise levels of achievement, they are here to stay.

Animal rights: time to talk turkey

THIS IS the time of year when we are reminded that dogs aren't for Christmases, they are for life; to which I recall Iacov Alexei Sayle responding: "We usually have a turkey round our place, actually." After the hunger strike by the campaigner, Barry Horne, and huge rows over vivisection and "animal rights", it is interesting to find in Stephen Budiansky a writer who emphatically will not stick up for the fluffy bums - at least, not if you want to suggest to him that they have thoughts, memories and intelligence that resemble ours.

In the 19th century, the Prussian horse "Clever Hans", it was claimed, was able to do maths by tapping the answer to multiple-choice questions with a hoof. Its reward was a sugar lump. However, investigators found

TUESDAY BOOK

IF A LION COULD TALK: HOW ANIMALS THINK
BY STEPHEN BUDIANSKY, WEIDENFELD & NICOLSON, £20

that if the people watching didn't know the answer to the question, Hans got it wrong. The smart horse was reacting to tiny changes in the observers' reactions as it reached the correct answer. So was Hans just a stupid horse? One could argue that it was really very clever to spot a piece of body language that none of the humans had noticed.

Budiansky, shortlisted twice for the Rhone-Poulenc science-writing

prizes, wants to examine what animals experience in their "consciousness" and what intelligence means. The book's title is taken from Wittgenstein, who said: "If a lion could talk, we would not understand him." Budiansky argues that if a lion could talk, we could understand him fine - but its "mind would no longer be a lion's mind".

Everyone - even scientists - does want animals to "talk". Rather than observing horses as herd animals well adapted to open grasslands, we want them to play the mathematical games we would demand from children. Rather than trying to see what makes chimpanzees unique, we want to teach some of them American sign language so we can feel gratified at how many words and simple "sentences" they can produce.

Even when describing such tests, language gets in the way. "The monkey went to the food" contains an undercurrent of intentionality that may be lacking in the animal. Even amoebae can direct themselves towards food sources. At what level of the evolutionary ladder should we say that simple response ends and intention begins?

The truth is that every animal has been equipped by that ultimate school of hard knocks, evolution, to deal as best it can with its environment - though all have ideal niches, determined by selection. Being among a bunch of twitting 19th century humans who offer sugar lumps for picking up subtle infections of movement is not a horse's ideal spot, but it will do its best. But it is not doing, and



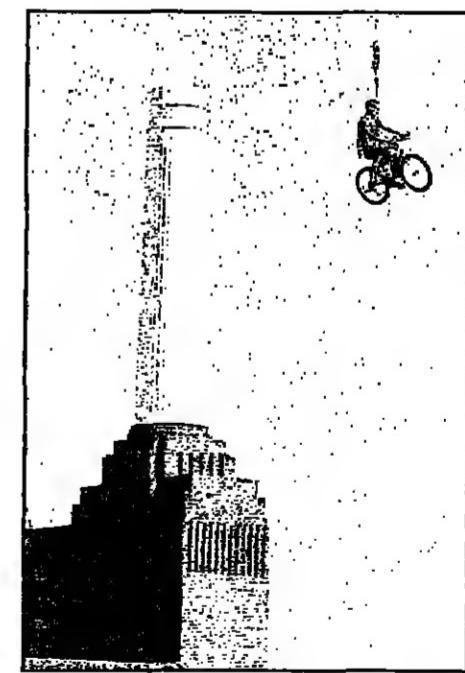
Learning sign language is not what makes chimps unique Bill Rountree

never will do, mathematics. Budiansky manages the neat trick of drumming this into the reader's head without ever seeming to be preaching.

However, he also manages an equally valuable task. Although behavioural scientists are always taught about Clever Hans in their first seminar the syllogism of "this is the answer, so that is the process by which the animal reached it" persists in modern research. Work with apes, chimpanzees, rats, mice, birds and worms all comes under sceptical inspection. Little passes the test. Budiansky wielded Occam's razor like Sweeney Todd, slaving through sloppy thinking about what animals might be "capable" of and bringing high-flying results (such as the chimp that appears able to add numbers for a food reward) crashing to earth.

One could argue that scientists, too, are driven by similar logic, in that the simplest way to get your name on a big scientific paper with attendant rise in status is to achieve a "conscious-like" response from an animal. But what sets the scientist apart is that paper. Humans stand on the other side

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Bungee Jump by Kalpesh Lathigra

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TUESDAY POEM

INDIAN PRINCESS PICKS LOVER OUT FROM GODS
BY RUTH PADEL

Thank God we cast
A spot of shadow in our lives,
Said the *Mahabharata* bride,
Facing five versions of her groom -

Your man himself plus four male gods,
Four dead-spot images, self-xeroxed in shape -
Who recognised that heartbeat,
The man she'd have to part with.

By the shadow at his heel. Gods don't go round
Casting shadow. Things we do and feel
(As a leader in *The Independent*
Put it afterwards) are incomplete.

Our poems until 8 January come from volumes shortlisted for the T S Eliot Prize, to be announced on 11 January. Ruth Padel's *Rembrandt Would Have Loved You!* is published by Chatto (£7.99).

CHARLES ARTHUR

Professor Nigel Holder

NIGEL HOLDER had recently become head of the Department of Anatomy and Developmental Biology at University College London, and was enjoying enormous success, when he died suddenly and left his family friends and colleagues devastated.

He had started life as a botanist, but after graduating from King's College London in 1974, chose to do a PhD with me on limb development, focusing on the development of joints and bone formation, at the Middlesex Hospital Medical School.

He made the transition with great ease and was awarded a Nato Postdoctoral Fellowship to work on limb regeneration at the University of California at Irvine. There he rapidly made significant contributions to the mechanisms by which the regeneration of the newt's limb is controlled.

It was characteristic of Holder's exceptional abilities to master new fields. When he returned to London in 1979 he was appointed Lecturer in Anatomy at King's College where he studied how nerve cells find their targets. He was soon promoted to a Readership and then became a Professor.

It was at King's that his imaginative organisational skills were put to particularly good effect. By persuading committee after committee he managed to set up a Developmental Biology Research Centre in Drury Lane.

The unit was a novel idea and brought together in an interdisciplinary environment a variety of different groups each with their own techniques; so there were those with a more classical approach to how the embryo develops - who thought mainly in terms of cells and how they signalled to each other and how they responded - interacting with those whose natural mode of thought was in terms of molecules. The centre was, and is, a great success.

Holder's own interests now moved towards analysing development using the techniques of genetics. He was one of the first in this country to begin to use the zebrafish as a model for such studies and he soon established himself as a leader of a major group studying how mutations could affect the development of the zebrafish embryo.

His reasons for choosing the zebrafish were not only because it had



He studied the zebrafish, because it had a short breeding cycle, but also because the embryo is transparent and so every cell can be followed under the microscope

a short breeding cycle and so made genetics possible, but also because the embryo is transparent and so the behaviour of every cell in the embryo can be followed under the microscope.

Holder was initially particularly interested in how the brain of the early embryo is patterned. He became increasingly convinced that a class of molecules known as ephrins play a vital role in signalling between cells during the development of the nervous system. More recently he discovered that they play a key role in the process whereby the embryo becomes segmented into blocks of tissue along its head to tail axis - blocks that later give rise to the vertebrae and body muscles.

Just 15 months ago Holder was appointed to his current position as head of department at UCL. This was a major commitment as it is a

very large and successful department. Holder had been diagnosed several years earlier as having vasculitis, an auto-immune disease affecting the blood vessels. At times the effects of the illness were severe but he never complained and stoically waited for each episode to pass.

There was every evidence that his doctors had found ways of controlling it, and he threw himself with enthusiasm into his new role. He built beautiful new aquaria for his fish and won support from many funding agencies to establish a large group of researchers.

He ran the department with a touch that gained him the affection and confidence of his colleagues. It also both amused and pleased him and me that he was now the boss of his former supervisor. Holder had friends in the scientific community throughout the world; he had a great talent for friendship. He loved paintings and music and had become an enthusiastic and moderately competent golfer.

His research was going very well and he had just been awarded a new grant for half a million pounds for special equipment. He had just completed, with a German colleague, a very important review of the role of ephrins in development. He was also planning a major reconstruction of part of the building in order to establish a new Centre for Post-Genomic Research.

Holder realised that more and more, as the genome - the DNA of humans and other organisms - was worked out there would be the need to find out what all those genes were actually doing. His commitment to both science and the department was total.

But so too was his commitment to his family. He was particularly proud of his six-year-old son Daniel's poem that he had composed all on his own on a computer; he had brought Michael, his nine-day-old son, into the department on the very day that he died.

LEWIS WOLPERT

Nigel Henry Keith Holder, developmental biologist; born London 2 July 1953; Lecturer in Anatomy, King's College London 1979-84; Reader 1984-93; Professor 1993-97; Head of Anatomy, University College London 1997-98; married 1990 Alison Fox (two sons); died London 11 December 1998.



Gatsonides after winning the Mobil Economy Run in a Citroen ID19 - he scored a hat-trick between 1964 and 1968

Maurice Gatsonides

IT IS taken for granted now that leading rally drivers are full-time professionals who make a handsome living from the sport. This was not the case between the wars and in the years just after the war.

When the war ended he resumed his motor trading activities and also tried to become a car manufacturer at his garage at Heemstede. He built a car using a Ford V-8 engine and other Ford parts which was called the Gato or Gatoord. This had starting aerodynamics with a cluster of lights on the front and covered occupants with a perspex canopy. The Gato did not prosper, as it was under-capitalised and Ford components were hard to get.

Gatsonides now had agencies for Studebakers and the British Hillman and Humber. He took a Studebaker on his first major post-war rally, the 1947 Alpine Trial, and when the Monte Carlo Rally was re-run in 1949, he won an award with a Hillman. The following year he was second overall with a Humber Super Snipe, a most unlikely rally car.

While the Monte had the glamour and the publicity, to the real rally success in the Alpine was the true criterion of a leading driver. The Alpine ran for a week in high summer over the toughest Alpine passes; the aim was to win an Alpine Cup for finishing without losing any marks. In 1951, Gatsonides was offered a works Jaguar XK 120 for the Alpine and Bill Mackenzie, the motoring correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, went with him as navigator and co-driver. The Jaguar broke down on the last day with a water leak when a cup was in sight; afterwards Mackenzie said he would

never go with Gatsonides again, it was too frightening.

In the 1952 Alpine he again used an XK 120 and this time secured a cup. His great win though, which secured him a permanent place in rallying history, was the 1953 Monte when he drove a Ford Zephyr; afterwards he admitted that he had taken the easier route over the Massif Central, but despite this had lost time and his winning margin was only three seconds.

The Monte always had a strong element of chance and in 1954 Gatsonides was paired with another former winner Marcel Béquet in a works DB 2/4 Aston Martin. They had a huge lead but lost it when Béquet missed a secret control and they fell to seventh place.

Gatsonides also tried his hand at motor racing, but he was a steady long-distance driver rather than a wheel-to-wheel racer, so in his four appearances in the Le Mans 24-hour race he treated it more as a fast rally than a race; he was placed 12th with an Austin-Healey in 1953 and 11th with a Frazer Nash in 1954. He also drove a Triumph TR2 in the 1954 Mille Miglia, the legendary Italian open road race. He was nominated as a co-driver of a Maserati in the 1952 Dutch Grand Prix but the car fell out so he never had the chance to match his abilities against the grand-prix drivers of the day.

In 1954 Gatsonides switched his rallying allegiance to Triumph and stayed with the British firm for the next four years, gaining Alpine Cups in 1954 and 1956 and many minor places. During this time, he also had successful outings with Porsche and DKW.

By the end of the 1950s a new and younger generation of rally drivers had emerged, so he gracefully moved away from the front-line events but still kept active driving Citroen ID19s in the Mobil Economy Runs, rallies which required rapidity with a light throttle foot. He won the Mobil event in 1958, and scored a hat-trick between 1964 and 1968.

Gatsonides retired as an active competition driver in the mid-1960s but showed his talent in a new and very profitable field. He had considerable skill as an electrical and electronic engineer and developed two devices which have had a great impact on British motorists.

First he invented the familiar timing device for catching speeding drivers, using two parallel rubber tubes set a short distance apart which operate pressure switches as vehicles cross them. His second device was the Gato flash camera which is now a familiar feature on road junctions throughout Britain, apprehending drivers who jump traffic lights.

Maurice Gatsonides was a man of great charm who had many friends in Britain; his son is now managing director of the Gato electronic companies.

DAVID VENABLES

Maurice Gatsonides, rally driver; born Gombong, Java 14 February 1911; married 1941 (one son, and one daughter deceased); died 29 November 1998.



Orion's name came from the title of a 1979 book about Elvis

ELVIS PRESLEY was so innovative and so distinctive that there have been impersonators from the moment he started making hit records in 1956. Ray Charles scored hits in the early 1960s as a quasi-Elvis, and numerous singers, including Cliff Richard and Billy Fury, copied his stage actions.

However, it was Elvis's triumphant return to concert performances in the late Sixties wearing bejewelled jump suits, and his subsequent death in 1977, that caused promoters everywhere to send in the clones. The real thing was no more, and many Elvis impersonators made a good living, and still do, by acting out their fantasies on stage. Orion was the first to exploit Elvis's death and, notoriously, wanted to convince listeners that Elvis had faded his own death and was back performing. He wore a mask so the masquerade was not too transparent. His record releases were on Sun, the very label on which Elvis had started.

In reality, Orion was the club singer Jimmy Ellis, who was born in

Orrville, Alabama, in 1945. Ellis recorded an album under his own name, *Sometimes Words Just Get In The Way*, for a small label in 1964. His fans remarked how closely he spoke and sang like Elvis. He maintained that it was coincidence.

In 1969 the Nashville entrepreneur Shelby Singleton acquired the back catalogue of Sun Records, though Elvis's tracks belonged to RCA. At first, Singleton marketed well-packaged reissues, but in 1972 he had Ellis record the titles on Elvis's first Sun single, "That's All Right (Mama)" and "Blue Moon Of Kentucky". They were released with a "?" for the artist, and it was mooted that they were alternative takes from Elvis's first recording session in 1954. However, Singleton had used an electric bass which had not even been invented at the time.

Undeterred, Singleton revived his hoax with Elvis's early death in 1977. The mysterious "?" released a yuletide single, "Don't Cry For Christmas," and Ellis's voice was added to familiar Sun tracks by Jerry

Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins and Charlie Rich. "Save The Last Dance For Me" by "Jerry Lee Lewis And Friend" was issued as a single in 1978.

The sleeve carried an endorsement from the song's composer, Doc Pomus, stating that he was sure it was Elvis. A voice test on the television programme *Good Morning America* confirmed that the mystery voice was indeed Elvis. Even the hard-hitting *New Musical Express* was fooled: Roy Carr wrote, "Ireck on this track is genuine and as such it's quite magnificent - a timely reminder of when recording sessions used to be fun." By today's standards, Ellis was not even a particularly good Elvis soundalike. Whilst this was going on, Ellis released a tribute single under his own name, "I'm Not Trying To Be Like Elvis", and an album, *By Request - Ellis Sings Elvis*.

Also in 1978, the author Gail Brewer-Giorgio published a novel, *Orion*, which told of an Elvis-style rock star who faked his own death. (The name was derived from Elvis's middle name, Aaron.) This struck a chord with *Shelby Singleton* and so Jimmy Ellis became Orion, whose debut album, *Reborn*, was released by Sun on gold vinyl in 1979. The cover showed the masked singer emerging from a coffin.

Just as children believe in Santa Claus, some fans wanted to believe that Orion was Elvis. Orion took his persona so seriously that he even wore his mask for rehearsals. Quite often he appeared on shows with Elvis Presley's former vocal backing group, the Jordanaires.

The ersatz Elvis had several singles in the US country charts, including "Am I That Easy To Forget" (1980) and US versions of the British hits "Rockabilly Rebel" (originally by Matchbox) and "Crazy Little Thing Called Love" (Queen), both 1981. With commendable productivity, he recorded several albums for Sun, *Sunrise* (1979), *Rockabilly* (1980), *Country* (1980), *Fresh* (1981), *Glory* (1981) and *Feelings* (1981). He built up a considerable live following, then in 1983 he ripped off his mask

before a capacity audience and vowed never to wear it again.

The full-faced Jimmy Ellis was nowhere near as popular and so in 1987 Ellis returned to the mask and his Orion persona. He released an album, *New Beginnings*, in 1987 and said at the time, "I don't mind being compared to Elvis, but I always wanted my own identity as an artist."

Orion found his comeback hard because, by then, Elvis impersonators had become commonplace: nowadays, there are Asian, Chinese and even female Elvises. Ellis and his girlfriend, Elaine Thompson, also ran a general store in Selma, Alabama. They were there when an armed robbery took place and both lost their lives. Ellis's last performance as the pseudo-Elvis had been in Nashville in a week earlier.

SPENCER LEIGH

Jimmy Hodges Ellis (Orion), singer; born Orrville, Alabama 26 February 1945; one son; died Seina, Alabama 12 December 1998.

William Denson

Denson was a 32-year old graduate of the West Point army academy and Harvard Law School when he was sent to the Judge Advocate's Office in Europe in 1945, and assigned as chief prosecutor for the trials which were soon to start at Dachau covering crimes committed at Buchenwald, Matthausen, Flossenbürg and Dachau itself. Technically the four were "mere" concentration camps, rather than Vernichtungslager or extermination camps, such as Auschwitz or Treblinka. But the wickedness committed there were scarcely less egregious.

Among those prosecuted by Denson was August Eigruber, a Nazi

Gauleiter in upper Austria whom he later described as "one of the most arrogant defendants I have ever encountered". Even from the scaffold, as the noose went around his neck, Eigruber shouted "Heil Hitler". The most famous defendant with whom he dealt however was Ilse Koch, dubbed the "Beast of Buchenwald" for her habit of personally selecting prisoners for sadistic beatings and torture which often killed them and accused of having lampshades and photograph albums made of tattooed human skin.

Because she was pregnant when she went for trial, the 40-year-old Koch was sentenced to life impris-

onment rather than death for her crimes against non-Germans. To Denson's declared disgust, her term was reduced in 1947 to only four years by General Lucius Clay, then the senior US official in occupied Germany. However she was resentenced to life by a German court for crimes against German citizens, and eventually committed suicide in 1967.

In a 1990 interview, Denson recalled how at first, although hardened to the horrors of war, he could not believe what he was hearing from camp survivors: "I thought here were some people who had been mistreated in the camps and were seeking revenge, and that they were real

ly doing a job drawing on fantasy rather than reality. But when I questioned witnesses, and they recounted substantially the same things, then I knew the events had occurred, because these people did not have a chance to get together and fabricate their stories."

Those who were in the dock struck him as having come from fairly normal backgrounds: but, Denson said, exposure to violence merely generated more violence; experience of atrocity merely raised the threshold of future atrocity. Of the 177 people he prosecuted, only four were acquitted, and 132 were sentenced to death. It was the highwater mark for war crimes trials in Europe. A dozen more tribunals

would sit in Nuremberg, but of the 185 who appeared before them, just 25 were sentenced to death.

In 1948 Denson returned home from Europe to become chief litigator for the Atomic Energy Commission in Washington - only to find himself representing the AEC in the trial of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, who were convicted and executed in 1953 for passing atomic secrets to the Soviet Union. He then became a partner in a New York law firm, specialising in patents and copyright, before ending his career with Melzer, Lippe, Goldstein, Wolf and Schlissel of Mineola, Long Island.

RUPERT CORNWELL

William Denson, lawyer; born Birmingham, Alabama 1913; married 1954 Constance Francken-Sierstorpff (one son, two daughters); died Lawrence, New York 13 December 1998.



War crimes prosecutor

NUREMBERG IS the universal shorthand for the trials of Nazi war criminals held after the Second World War. In fact, however, it was the trials in which William Denson served which dealt with the truly horrendous cases. They involved the lesser-ranking officials, bureaucrats and military officers who actually carried out the bestial policies mapped out by Hitler and his closest henchmen. Indeed, in terms of death sentences sought and carried out, Denson was the most successful of all US war crimes prosecutors. Of the 177 Nazis who appeared before him, 132 were sentenced to death and 97 went to the gallows.

Alfred Roth

THE SWISS

architect, artist and writer Alfred Roth was one of the last of the original generation of international modern architects closely associated with the Functionalist cause.

In 1927, he spent some time in Le Corbusier's atelier in Paris. There he worked on and wrote about the Le Corbusier villa and apartment blocks built that year for the Werkbund Exhibition on the Weissenhof, Stuttgart. The following year he went to Gothenburg in Sweden, where he designed a series of low-cost apartments in the modern style.

He commenced his own architectural practice in 1933 in Zurich, where four years later he collaborated with Marcel Breuer, the former Bauhaus master, and his cousin Emil Roth (they practised as Alfred and Emil Roth) on the renowned Doldertal apartment blocks in Zurich, which were the epitome of the cubic Functionalist style: plain, flat-roofed, white buildings. He built his own house there in 1960, continuing the same tradition.

In the post-war period Roth worked closely with the Finnish architect Alvar Aalto whose work he had introduced to the Swiss public in an exhibition in Zurich in 1941. They collaborated on many projects, a fact acknowledged in the exhibition — commemorating the centenary of Aalto's birth — now showing at the Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule, where Roth's archives are held.

His personal archive is extensive, containing material of a lifetime's practice as an architect as well as the records of the years he served as editor of the Swiss-based architectural magazine *Werk* (1943-56). The polemic he waged in *Werk* underlined his own interest in regional architecture and the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, someone else he met, promoted and exhibited in Zurich.

Roth was concerned with the integration of the arts. He saw them best unified under the banner of a "Modern" architecture: "All my architectural endeavours and all my thinking are firmly based on the principles of... functional architecture," he wrote in 1960, although he warned that the most important aspect of Functionalism was its demand for "beauty, harmony, nobility, and inventiveness".

He was also a minor painter in his own right, following closely the De Stijl work of Max Bill and the Swiss/German Konkreten artists from the mid-twenties whose Constructivist paintings and three-dimensional artefacts introduced formal, grids, patterns, primary colours and geometrical shapes. In this



Roth's buildings epitomised the Functionalist style René Burri/Book Art Architecture Picture Library

kind of art — as in the rationalist architecture it paralleled — the artist determines everything mathematically.

Roth is probably best remembered in Britain for the excellent exhibition he curated at the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) in 1946 on Swiss architecture and planning and for his much admired books. He published *The New Architecture*, in 1939. In it, he

issued in 1950 and his autobiography, *Alfred Roth: Architekt der Kontinuität* in 1985. He was made an honorary member of the RIBA in 1948.

Alfred Roth was a generous man and widely admired locally as a *Vermittler* or facilitator, bringing together people from many disciplines, encouraging writers and students to clarify their thoughts on art and architecture. He

issued a Swiss friend a few years ago, I rang his doorbell. He welcomed us and once inside I discovered one of my own books opened on his drawing board at the pages that featured his work

Soon he was talking us through his work. He was still active as architect in his late eighties. We looked briefly at the drawings of his work on the Middle East, particularly his accomplished Sabbagh Centre in Beirut (with Aalto). But it was his own house he was most proud of and he took us on a tour. He pointed out the many small Mondrian-like coloured drawings he had propped up all over the house — except in the rooms hired out to students.

Significantly, he had reduced his own living requirements to a camp bed in the living room and the use of the shared facilities. He lived out his functionalist role to the end.

DENNIS SHARP

Alfred Roth, architect; born Wangen, Switzerland 21 May 1903; died Zurich 20 October 1998.

He warned that the most important aspect of Functionalism was its demand for 'beauty, harmony, nobility and inventiveness'

featured the Boots Factory at Beeston in Nottinghamshire by Sir Owen Williams side by side with work by the second generation of Modern Movement masters, thus acknowledging the successful diaspora of the Functionalist idea. His book on the New School was

served as a professor of architecture at the Swiss Federal Institute from 1957 to 1971 and taught briefly at Harvard.

His own house and studio on the Doldertal estate have more recently become a place of pilgrimage for a whole new generation of architects. Touring

the estate with a Swiss friend a few years ago, I rang his doorbell. He welcomed us and once inside I discovered one of my own books opened on his drawing board at the pages that featured his work

GAZETTE

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

DEATHS

JACK: Mary, aged 90, peacefully in Greenwich. Funeral at Morten College Chapel, Blackheath, 31 December at 3pm.

HEPPER: see Barlow, on 15 December in Crematorium, Patricia, aged 85, beloved mother of Vernon, Victor and Gerald Hill, and stepmother of Edward and Richard Hepper. Funeral service at St Mary's Church, Mordard Bishop, on Tuesday 24 December at 11am, followed by a short service at St Mary's Church, Catherleigh. Enquiries to A. White & Sons 01363 772043.

MULGAN: Diana, died peacefully at home on Friday 11 December 1998, aged 85 years. Wife of Tom Granville, much loved by family and friends. Interment to take place on Wednesday 23 December at 3.30pm at Mortlake Crematorium. Flowers or donations for "The Hale Clinic" or "Musicians Benevolent Fund" may be sent to Mr. Smith & Sons, 28 High Street, Barnes, SW13. The Rev Barry Smith will officiate.

ANNIVERSARIES

Births: Roger II, King of Sicily, 1095; Hermann Samuel Reimarus theologian and philosopher, 1694; James Edward Oglethorpe, colonist and founder of Georgia, 1696; Jean-Etienne Liotard, painter, 1702; Carl Friedrich Abel, composer, 1728; John Crome ("Old Crome"), landscape painter, 1768; Franz Abt, composer and conductor, 1819; Jean-Henri Fabre, naturalist, 1823; Charles Stuart Calverley, poet and parodist, 1831; William Hall White ("Mark Rutherford"), novelist, 1831; John Nevil Maskelyne, stage magician, 1839; Teresa Carreño, pianist, 1853; Giacomo Antonio Domenico Michele Secondo Maria Puccini, operatic composer, 1858; Edwin Arlington Robinson, poet, 1869; Franz Schmidt, com-

poser, 1874; Edgard (Edgar Victor Achille-Charles) Varse, composer, 1883; Deems Taylor, composer, 1885; Alan Dudley Bush, composer, conductor and pianist, 1900; Pierre Brasseur (Pierre-Albert Espinasse), actor, 1905.

Deaths: Aulus Vitellius, Roman emperor, beheaded AD 69; François Clouet (Janet), miniature painter, 1572; Maximilian de Bethune, Duke of Sully, soldier and statesman, 1614; Giovanni Francesco Barbieri (Guercino), painter, 1666; Richard Alleine, religious writer, 1681; Michel Baron (Michel Boyron), actor and playwright, 1729; Jan Dismas Zelenka, composer, 1745; Simon Mathurin Lantara, landscape painter, 1778; James Harris, grammarian, 1780; Sir Philip Francis, civil servant and writer, 1818; The Rev Martin Joseph Routh, scholar, 1854; George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans), novelist, 1880; Henry Watterson, journalist and politician, 1921; Dwight Lyman Moody, evangelist, 1899; Baron Richard von Kraft-Ebing, psychiatrist, 1920; Nathaniel West (Nathan Wallenstein Weinsteim), novelist, 1940; Franz Boas, anthropologist, 1942; Helen Beatrix Potter, writer and artist, 1943; Harry Langdon, silent film comedian, 1944; Richard Frederick Dimbleby, television commentator, 1968; Josef von Sternberg, film director, 1969; Darryl Francis Zanuck, film producer, 1979; William Henry Pilkington, Baron Pilkington, 1983; David Penhaligon MP, killed in a car accident 1988; Lord (Ted) Willis, playwright, politician and writer, 1992.

Theatre, 1716: Beethoven's 5th and 6th (Pastoral) symphonies were first played in Vienna, 1808; Alfred Dreyfus was convicted and sentenced to imprisonment on Devil's Island, 1895; the Ministry of Pensions was first set up, 1916; the musical show *Lilac Time* was first produced in London, 1922; in Java, the Merapi volcano erupted, causing over 700 deaths, 1930; the musical show *High Button Shoes* was first produced in London, 1948; the withdrawal of British and French forces from Port Said was completed, 1956; Southern Rhodesia left the Commonwealth, 1966; Kurt Waldheim was elected Secretary-General of the United Nations, 1971; a violent earthquake in Guinea resulted in over 400 deaths, 1983; a Pan American jumbo jet crashed on to the town of Lockerbie in Scotland, killing all 259 passengers and crew, and 11 people on the ground, 1988.

Today is the Feast Day of St Cheraemon and Others, St Flavians of Tuscany, St Ischyron and St Zenon.

LECTURES

Victoria and Albert Museum: Clare Ford Willie, "Neo-Classical Portraiture", 2pm.

EPRIME ESHAG

A memorial occasion to commemorate the life and work of Eprime Eshag will be held in Wadham College, Oxford, on Saturday 23 January 1999, starting in the Holywell Music Room at 2.30pm.

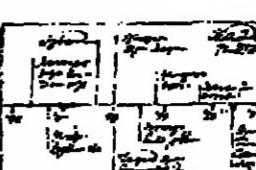
DINNERS

Royal Society of Saint George
Lord Levene of Portsoken, Lord Mayor of London, and Lady Levene, Lady Mayoress,

The Household Cavalry mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; 1st Battalion The Duke of Wellington's Regiment mounts the Queen's Guard, Buckingham Palace, 1.30pm, band provided by the Scots Guards.

Post Gazette announcements to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, telephone 0171-293 2012 (24-hour answering machine 0171-293 2011) or fax to 0171-293 2010. Please give a daytime telephone number.

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HISTORICAL NOTES

RALPH HARRINGTON

People on the move in the ancient world

TRANSPORT IS as old as human society: as long as people have been around, they have moved themselves and the things they need from place to place.

The oldest recorded story in the world, the Mesopotamian *Epic of Gilgamesh* from the third millennium BC, contains an important and enigmatic passage about Urshanabi, the ferryman of Utanapishtim, who carries King Gilgamesh of Uruk across the ocean that is the boundary of the known world: this is possibly the earliest reference we have to a transport professional. Fifteen hundred years later we have the account of the difficulties Odysseus encountered in voyaging from Troy to Ithaka. The 500-mile journey ended up taking him 10 years; not for nothing in the ancient world was the sea regarded as alarming and untrustworthy.

Land travel, too, had its perils. In the Old Testament we have, in the Book of Numbers, the story of Balaam and the angel; the seer Balaam, travelling in the course of his duties but contrary to God's will, to the land of Moab, was baffled, then infuriated, then violent and abusive, when the ass he was riding came to a sudden halt, having seen, as her rider could not, the angel of the Lord blocking the path. Balaam's anger, we are told, "was kindled, and he smote the ass with his staff"; an early example of road rage.

Rome, of course, had its roads. The heart of Rome was the ancient equivalent of a road sign: the *milliarium aureum*, the golden milestone, from which the great roads — the Via Flaminia, the Via Appia — radiated the length and breadth of Europe, and beyond, into Africa and Asia. And along those roads moved merchants, artisans, farmers, doctors, civil servants, and of course generals and soldiers, and along them, too, travelled the language and customs of Rome, literature and philosophy, religions old and new. The Roman road was simultaneously military hardware, political symbol, cultural conduit and economic infrastructure, and this is why no means of transport have ever embodied this conjunction of the political, the cultural and the economic.

Travel is more than just the utilitarian expression of the human requirement: it is also an expression of freedom. Societies which have sought to limit freedom have always controlled travel and transport, the movement of people, goods and ideas.

Today the networks of transport we have around us and upon which we depend are expressions of a greater modern freedom. The freedom which is spread more widely and has a greater influence than has ever been the case before. The consequence of this freedom is prosperity, opportunity and a richness of life inconceivable to most of our ancestors.

Ralph Harrington is writing "Metropolis in Motion: transport, communication and the modern city, 1880-1940".

Mistletoe: a plant for all seasons



THE INDEPENDENT ARCHIVE

22 DECEMBER 1987

Before ever a couple kissed under the Christmas mistletoe, it was a plant of ancient religious significance. Now it is emerging as a treatment for cancers. Oliver Gillie reports

THREE GRAINS of mistletoe pollen together with a few odd facts are enough for archaeologists to construct an intriguing theory of human sacrifice in a sacred grove.

Lindwom man, who was killed around 300BC, and found in a peat bog in Cheshire in 1984, had three grains of mistletoe pollen in his stomach. His throat was cut and he had also been garrotted with a thong.

Archaeologists have concluded that Lindwom man may have been killed by Druids in a sacred grove in April or May while the mistletoe was in bloom. Equally, he may have been taking mistletoe as a potion to give himself magical strength or as an ancient remedy for epilepsy or some other ill.

Pliny, writing in the first century AD, describes rites in groves of oak trees bearing mistletoe, although by this time human sacrifices had been banned by the Romans and white bulls were offered instead. He says that the Druids had nothing more sacred than the mistletoe.

They call the mistletoe by a name meaning, in their language, the all-healing. Having made preparation for sacrifice and a banquet beneath the trees, they bring thither two white bulls, whose horns are bound for the first time. Clad in a white robe, the priest ascends the tree and cuts the mistletoe with a golden sickle, and it is received by others in white robes.

Then they kill the victim, praying that the god will render this gift of his propitious to those to whom he has granted it. They believe that the mistletoe, taken in drink, imparts fecundity to all animals and that it is an antidote for all poisons.

Today, mistletoe is brought into houses in winter so that, according to tradition, the spirits

of the forest can seek shelter from bleak winter weather. Druidic power is still tacitly recognised today, in so far as the plant is forbidden in churches. The Rev Philip Conway, Assistant Curate of the Parish Church, Bishop's Castle, Shropshire, to be Priest-in-Charge, Menabilty (Trawsfynydd).

The Rev Philip Harrison, Rector, Drymen with Fifehope (Norwich); to be also Rural Dean of Cheadle (same diocese). The Rev David Purdy, Vicar, Kirby Muxloe, Leicestershire; to be also Rural Dean of Gainsborough and Retford (Nottinghamshire); to be co-consecrated Canon, York Minster (same diocese).

The Rev Martin Paul, Warden and Sacrist, St Paul's Cathedral (London); to be Vicar, Whitchurch Hill St. Peter (Buckinghamshire); to be also Rural Dean of Chelmsford (same diocese).

The Rev Lawrence Price, Priest-in-Charge, Kingsley (Lichfield); to be also Rural Dean of Cheadle (same diocese). The Rev Robert Alexander, Vicar, Great Moreton and Ringley, Cheshire; St Peter's, Much Wenlock (Shropshire); to be Priest-in-Charge, Much Wenlock (Shropshire).

The Rev Andrew West, Team Vicar, Bedworth (Coveney); to be Chaplain, Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education (Gloucester). The Rev Queen Wilson, Priest-in-Charge, Burscough St. Peter (Blackburn); to be Rector, same benefice.

Today, mistletoe is brought into houses in winter so that, according to tradition, the spirits

would be unfamiliar to many readers, as it was to them. Thousands of excellent poems, verbs and adjectives that have stood in every decent dictionary for years are still unfamiliar to such ignoramus, and I do not solicit their patronage.

Let them continue to recreate themselves with whodunits, and leave my vocabulary and me to my own customers, who have all been to school.

American immigrant Arshile Gorky was sidelined by Abstract Expressionism. Time for a reassessment? By Barèt Magarian

Through the eyes of a child

Arshile Gorky is one of the great enigmas of 20th century art. His influence has been vast and yet his name does not carry the weight of his contemporaries—Mark Rothko, Willem de Kooning, and Jackson Pollock. Born in 1901, he was raised in a provincial farming community in Western Armenia, and emigrated to America in 1920, where he later flourished in New York's bohemian circle, evolving into a brilliantly dynamic painter.

He survived the Armenian genocide that took place between 1915 and 1920 when the Ottoman Turks murdered, tortured and uprooted two million Armenians, raping their lands and destroying their culture. In New York he kept his past a secret to stifle its pain, and took the name of the Russian writer Maxim Gorky, whom he admired. His real name was Manoug Adoian.

Nouritza Matossian has written a profoundly moving, illuminating biography of the painter she spent 15 years researching. She is the only biographer of Gorky's who has had intimate access to his relatives and culture, having undertaken a pilgrimage to the site of his birthplace, now in present day Eastern Turkey.

Her visceral prose in *Black Angel—A Life of Arshile Gorky* conveys the magical, otherworldly aura of the village of Van where he grew up. She provides an intricate historical framework for the circumstances of his early life and the genocide. After bringing Gorky and his sister to safety their mother died of starvation during the famine that gripped Armenia in 1919. His work forever after paid tribute to her memory, in the most haunting way.

The genocide shattered everything—it took away his mother, his home, his family. His way of dealing with it was by creating a new identity. He felt an immense debt to his mother because she was his greatest teacher and inspiration—not because she taught him art, but because of the way she looked at the world and made him sensitive to objects, nature and encouraged him to



paint and draw. His sister Vartoosh told me how, after he'd finished it, she showed her the double portrait of *The Artist and his Mother*, and said: 'Here's your mum—you can talk to her now.' It was as if he was bringing her back to life.'

Various commentators have discerned the influence of Picasso, Uccello, Ingres, and Miro in *The Artist and his Mother*, seeing it as a work of eclectic elegance. Matossian argues audaciously that the central inspirations were the frescoes of the Virgin and saints in the Church of the Holy Cross that were situated near to Gorky's childhood village.

"In addition to informing his work, the sacred art he had been saturated in as a boy made him reject the concept of commercial art. This ascetic seriousness struck a lot of the people around him, including de Kooning, who was very devoted to him and Rothko, whom Gorky taught for a short period."

De Kooning always said that Gorky was the master. He delved back into the molten core of his memories and recast them via modern Western techniques."

His lofty, moral view of art relates to the sense that emerges from the book of Gorky's self-imposed mission to vindicate the victims of the geno-

cide. While some of the mature paintings are conceived within its devastating orbit, others embody Gorky's life-affirming character and come close to being works of sheer exuberance. Colours, dance, and shapes and structures appear to be in a state of motion as he captures the flux of experience in associative, kaleidoscopic webs. But the purity of Gorky's approach to art was to consign him to neglect.

"He didn't care about selling things; he gave away paintings very readily. He tried to get a dealer, but it wasn't what was important to him. And because he died young there was no one around to promote his work. No one was really pushing him and making sure the exhibitions were going ahead. The other reason he isn't more well known was because a lot of people thought that Abstract Expressionism necessarily led to the kind of work that Pollock and others ended up doing. Gorky didn't go down the same route, so people thought he was stuck in the past. I think this is a completely erroneous view. He was pursuing his own culturally authentic agenda; and there is a sensitivity and finesse in his work that is totally original in American art. No one else painted in the way Gorky did."

Towards the end, Gorky's life was prised apart by misfortunes that seemed eerily to link with the traumas of his childhood. A fire destroyed many of his paintings; he lost his wife to the Chilean artist Matta Echurren; his body was decimated by cancer. In the end, at the age of 46, he gave up the struggle, and took his own life.

Despite the darkness of Gorky's life, Matossian's account is paradoxically enlivening as she tells his story with an almost novelistic intensity. Her book finally leaves us with the image of a man of monumental will and spirit, who embraced life with every fibre, and whose sufferings never undermined his integrity either as a man or as an artist.

Black Angel—A Life of Arshile Gorky is published by Chatto and Windus, £25.



Main picture: 'The Artist and his Mother' by Arshile Gorky; left, Nouritza Matossian

In every home a headache

As Christmas approaches, an exhibition in Edinburgh offers a fresh take on the ghosts of festivities past: nostalgia and claustrophobia. By Elisabeth Mahoney



IT'S ALL Perry Como's fault. And Bing Crosby's. And Andy Williams's and Val Doonican's while we're on the subject. For they brought us the definitive, ultra-cheesy Christmas Specials, with their families (or were they from Rentamob, I always wondered) gathered round piles of roasting chestnuts. They never looked like the folk we mostly surround ourselves with for the annual turkey-fest: in perennial soft-focus they beamed, so chuffed to see one another—they never overdid it on the sherry, argued or fell asleep in front of the telly.

At this time of year, the complicated reality of family life looks large as we contemplate visits home to our nearest and should-be-dearest. All the mixed feelings this prospect may trigger—that strange blend of nostalgia, security and claustrophobia—are touched upon in *Family*. This is a fascinating group show of work by artists largely associated with the YBA phenomenon (but don't let that put you off): Damien Hirst, Georgina Starr, Rachel Whiteread, Gary Hume, and many others. It's no insult to the art to say that the star of the show is the setting, Inverleith House.

A private family residence until the late Fifties, it's a grand old place in the middle of Edinburgh's Royal Botanic Gardens, with fabulous views over the city to the Castle. As a gallery it has enviable light, space and serenity, but for this show it has the special distinction of having also been a home. You half expect to meet the ghosts of Christmases past on the stairs.

For *Family*, those ghosts have been stirred from their slumber, with the original domestic use of each room playfully revived and no labelling of work to accentuate the atmosphere of a private house. In the drawing-room, there are seven drawings, hung along one wall, the wires left visible, highlighting the room's cornicing as much as the work itself. Apart from the works, the room is empty—as if to remind us that this use of space is now largely redundant. Not many of us have a room like this just for formal receptions.

Next to the dining-room is the odd

squalor of a kitchen specialising in liquid lunches. In one bedroom, it's about the attraction (or at least co-existence) of opposites—Whiteread's drawings of concave and convex beds, and Tatsuo Miyajima's red and green LED numerical display, *Opposite Harmony*; two screens of changing numbers, strangely compelling and calming to look at; in the other bedroom, a private moment of misery in Georgina Starr's video, *Crying*.

Maybe she got the wrong end of a cracker.

Family, to 31 Jan at Inverleith House, Royal Botanic Gdns, Edinburgh (0131-348 2943). Open 10.30am-3.30pm, admission free. Closed 24-28 Dec, 28 Dec-1 Jan, and Mondays

Paul Nesbitt

THE INDEPENDENT COLLECTOR

JOHN WINDSOR'S GUIDE TO COLLECTING CONTEMPORARY ART
THIS WEEK: LAWRIE SIMONSON

ANOTHER BUG—hut quite unlike last week's computer-generated print of a ladybird. Lawrie Simonson trained as a graphic designer but balked at computer imaging and took a course in welding at his local poly. Now, at 48, he is Britain's foremost junk sculptor.

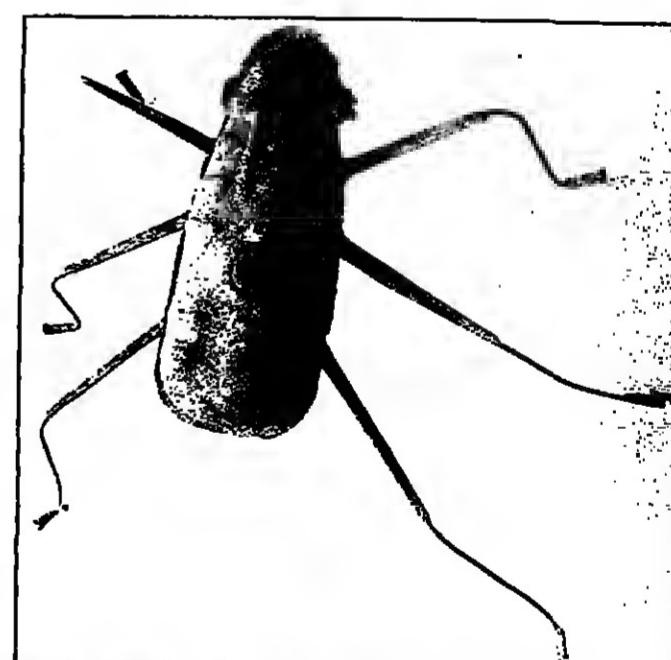
His water beetle shown here is 2ft tall and weighs 12lb. Its body is a discarded car exhaust, its legs are iron rods, bent in a vice. The realistic feet have been welded on.

It is lurking slightly to one side, as water beetles do. Simonson observes them and other water creatures, lying on his tummy on the banks of ponds and lakes on Hampstead Heath, Hadley Woods and Trent Park. Beetles that venture into his kitchen find themselves being scrutinised for half an hour on the table, before being released into the garden.

The trouble with most junk sculpture is that it looks like well-junk. But Simonson, who has a season ticket to London Zoo and his own library of natural history textbooks, sees particular species of animals hidden in every piece of junk he claps eyes on. This is what distinguishes him from run-of-the-mill junk sculptors, who are content to make wonky tables and chairs, or abstracts, or batches of the well-known idea—a garden rakes as birds, for example.

Simonson is better known on the Continent than here. The Continentals are into junk art. They hold two-day junkfests attended by 10,000 people at which chosen artists, mainly from Europe, are confronted with a mountain of junk and told to get on with it.

Simonson's metal insects and birds were a hit at Drap Art in Barcelona and Braderie de l'Art in Roubaix, France, both in 1997. In Barcelona, in a marquee outside the Museum of Modern Art, 100 artists hammered, sawed and welded for two days. Roubaix was even more frenetic: only 24 hours



Water beetle—from a car exhaust and iron rods

supports for system-built shelving. This is not just any old dog. It's a fox terrier.

The roof of Simonson's studio in Camden Town is a menagerie of creatures that have been scrubbed clean with wire wool, then left to acquire the patina that rain and rust bring.

What does he like most about all of his clinking, clanking creatures? "It's the humour," he says.

In the past 16 years Simonson has made about 50 junk creatures and has had five corporate and public commissions, including nine sculptures—birds, insects and a mobile of a mythological sailing ship—that are on show in the Tudor Barn of Hainault Forest Country Park. His last solo show was the Millennium Bug Show at the gallery 51, Poland Street, central London, last month. A selection of his sculptures is permanently on display at the Jelly Leg'd Chicken Arts Gallery in Reading, Berkshire (0118-950 7926). Prices range from £500 to £2,000.

HEALTH

Half the people who read this article will probably be suffering from a cold. Yet last month, the Common Cold Centre admitted there is still a long battle ahead to find a cure for the world's most common illness. By Emma Cook

Still fighting the cold war

Fifty years from now, no doubt, cancer will be controllable, heart disease a distant memory and we'll all have clones for organ transplants. But you can bank on it that even in 2050 we'll still be sniffing, coughing and sneezing our way through the rest of the century.

It is almost as if the doctors have given up trying to find a cure. Ten years ago, the famous Cold Cure Unit in Salisbury closed its doors, partly because their extended trials just didn't find anything conclusive.

Now is when we need it most - the cold is the most prevalent disease among humans. Every day, about 50 million people worldwide wake up with one. Around 400,000 people will have a cold today, and this week probably half your office will have one. During an average lifespan (75 years), we'll catch around 210 colds - each lasting five or six days. On average, we each spend three years of our lives coughing and sneezing.

So why do these generally harmless infections cause so much discomfort? The virus itself causes only tiny pinpricks of damage to the lining of the nose. The symptoms of a cold are caused by our immune system which triggers the disinfecting process - coughing, runny nose - to wash away the virus.

These days, most research is carried out in other countries, even though the common cold feels like a British institution in itself. If the symptoms are, the cure certainly won't be; last month we heard that after 10 years and £5m of research, including the painstaking construction of a 2ft high model of a cold virus, the head of the Common Cold Centre had finally admitted defeat. "I don't foresee a cure in which we eradicate all the viruses," said Professor Ronald Eccles, the director of the centre at University of Wales, Cardiff. "I think the best we can hope for is to live at peace with it."

The centre has tested a large number of potential cold cures, including high-tech anti-viral agents, and so far none of them look set to eradicate the cold for ever. Instead, doctors are starting to agree that maybe lifestyle and diet could hold



We each spend, on average, three years of our lives coughing and sneezing. The best way to fight the virus seems to be a healthy lifestyle and diet. Ed Sykes

the key. Certainly, stress plays a part. Research has shown that worrying about an infection can make the symptoms more severe, weakening the immune system because the brain thinks the bug is actually worse than it really is.

As we approach the end of the century, viruses are really coming into their own; mutating, dividing and growing more resistant by the decade. As Eccles says: "The trouble is that there are more than 200

different viruses which cause colds. Finding a single cure is like trying to cure measles, chickenpox, mumps and rubella all at once."

The other obstacle is that most colds don't last long enough for doctors to prove whether the drugs have really attacked the virus that caused them. Dr Karl Nicholson, senior lecturer at the Leicester Royal Infirmary, says: "By and large, they're short-lived infections, so you've got to have a drug that gets

to the virus very quickly. It's very difficult to show that you've cut an infection from two days to one day, and much easier to prove if the symptoms last for say six weeks and your drug cuts it to three."

Nicholson specialises in flu viruses rather than common colds - the two might seem similar but there are important differences. Whereas the cold is a minor form of upper respiratory illness, flu tends to affect the lower respiratory area, the

chest, and is generally a more serious virus. It also seems more likely that they'll find a cure for it. According to Dr Nicholson, there are several on their way. "There have been some important developments in the last five years."

In particular, a new flu cure that stops the virus spreading in the body by blocking the action of neuraminidase, an enzyme the virus relies on to infect new cells. Glaxo has applied for a licence following trials

of more than 2,000 patients in Britain and worldwide.

But the cure doesn't help cold sufferers, who will just have to wait for their miracle cure. Wrapping up warm, drinking plenty of fluids, and staying in bed still seems to be the safest and most beneficial remedy. Or you can choose from one of the "symptom relievers" below, and kid yourself that they really work. As Professor Eccles says: "Never underestimate the power of a placebo."

Single sperm count

HEALTH CHECK



JEREMY LAURANCE

THE PUBLIC has no love for genetics. Manipulating the building blocks of life should, in the view of many, be off limits for scientists. There may be benefits from genetically modified food, even from cloning, but too much is at stake, ethically and in safety terms, to allow bottins free rein.

Strange, then, that the biggest genetic experiment of all - involving the birth of over 3,000 babies in the UK alone so far - is going on under our noses with barely a murmur of comment, let alone protest.

I am referring to ICSI - the injection of genetic material (in the form of a single sperm) into an egg to create an embryo. Its full title is Intra Cytoplasmic Sperm Injection and it is the fastest-growing method of in vitro fertilisation, according to the annual report of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority, published last week.

The race that all sperm are involved in from the moment they are deposited in the vagina to reach the egg may have a purpose - to weed out damaged sperm which could pass their defects to the next generation.

The act of sexual intercourse ensures a process of natural selection - a process over-ridden by ICSI.

What are the long-term consequences of tampering with nature in this way? No one knows. Some studies have suggested a slightly higher risk of congenital defects among ICSI babies, but others have shown no such increase.

One fear is that male children born by the method will inherit the infertility suffered by their fathers. Is a man's life ruined by the discovery that he cannot have children or is it an acceptable price for being born? Does he simply choose ICSI in his turn?

The HFEA has long been concerned by ICSI, but warnings of potential genetic consequences have zero impact. The desperate desire for a child guarantees they will be ignored.

The use of ICSI is almost certain to grow because success rates are now 40 per cent higher than with ordinary IVF. We have to face the fact that we are in the midst of the biggest genetic experiment in human history - and we will not know the outcome for another 50 years.

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Comfort but no cure from pills and potions

ANTIBIOTICS

Far too many antibiotics are prescribed unnecessarily for colds and flu viruses. In a recent US survey, 60 per cent of patients seen by GPs for a common cold were given some sort of antibiotic. Another study, in Switzerland, found that antibiotics were effective only in 10 per cent of patients who had bacterial complications, which is the only reason any antibiotics should be prescribed.



ASPIRIN

Another symptom-reliever, which reduces fever. "Gargling soluble aspirin can also help sore throats,

acting like an anaesthetic," says Roger Odd, who does warn against giving aspirin to children under 12 years old. In rare cases, it can cause Reye's syndrome in younger people, causing brain and liver damage. Many GPs prefer paracetamol, which also reduces feverish symptoms.



STEAM INHALATION

The oldest remedy around. It's widely believed that breathing in steam from a bowl or jug can ease the soreness and discomfort of a cold. It is cheap and safe and some people find it helpful, though

there's no solid evidence to back up the belief.

ECHINACEA

This herbal treatment based on root extracts is an increasingly popular remedy, and supposedly boosts the immune system. In a recent German trial, though, there were no significant differences between those who took it and those who were given a placebo. Professor Eccles is still keen to see more research carried out. "The widespread usage of echinacea preparations for many different infections supports the case for further analysis," he says.

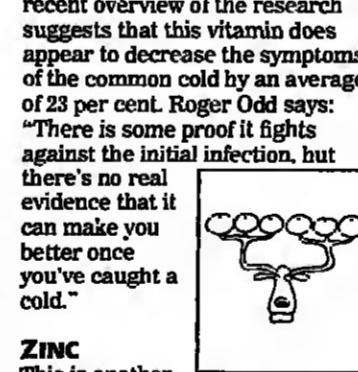


VITAMIN C

Over the last 30 years, there has been a glut of studies examining the effectiveness of vitamin C. A recent overview of the research suggests that this vitamin does appear to decrease the symptoms of the common cold by an average of 23 per cent. Roger Odd says: "There is some proof it fights against the initial infection, but there's no real evidence that it can make you better once you've caught a cold."

ZINC

This is another remedy that doesn't really target the virus itself. Like vitamin C, it should be taken regularly to



protect from an infection - by the time a cold starts it's probably too late. In eight recent trials, four showed a benefit and the other four didn't.

Some people swear by its properties, although the exact mechanism through which zinc affects the common cold remains unclear.

ANTIHISTAMINES

Available in tablets, capsules or spray. Speak to a pharmacist about which one to use - there are ones designed specifically for certain symptoms, such as a blocked nose. According to a recent US study, these are one of the most effective

symptom relievers - "significantly" reducing sneezing and runny nose - rhinorrhoea.

Roger Odd, head of professional and scientific services at the Royal Pharmacy Society, says: "These can ease but not cure your symptoms. Don't overuse them - your body can build up resistance to them."

CAMPHOR RUBS

There are various decongestant vapours that stimulate the nasal passages, such as the menthol-and-eucalyptus-based Vicks VapoRub, and oibas oil. Old-fashioned but soothes symptoms.



The origin of specious argument

We're now so slack intellectually that any old speculation is being put out in the media as science, if it is blessed with the label "evolutionary" or "genetic".

This is partly because evolutionary research nearly always upholds the right-wing world view adhered to by 90 per cent of the press. A new study claiming a "gene for" depression or being gay is far more likely to attract column inches or television documentary coverage than one indicating a major causal influence of class, gender bias or parental care on our psychology.

A fine example is a social psychological text published earlier this year, *Wednesday's Child* by Antonio Bifulco and Patricia Moran (Routledge). Thus far, the sole attention it has attracted is one brief news report in this newspaper.

Complete with accessible case histories, the book describes the results of four studies that have been undertaken over the last 30 years of the social origins of depression in women, funded by

the Medical Research Council at Royal Holloway and Bedford New College, London University.

Previous publications from the same research unit have provided by far the most influential and important demonstration of the causes of depression, evidence of infinitely greater significance than anything produced by geneticists before or since: in a sample of 458 women, those with a low income (23 per cent) were far more likely to be depressed than those with a high income (6 per cent) - a finding that has been replicated in nine further studies world-wide.

To a jaded media executive the fact that being poor puts women at much greater risk of depression is of almost no interest. But *Wednesday's Child* moves the story on a new level by explaining why some low-income women become depressed, but not others: the reason is quality of care during childhood.

Bifulco and her colleagues interviewed 500 women about whether they had been neglected or abused as children. One third of

those who had suffered one of these childhood adversities had been depressed in the 12 months before being interviewed, compared with only 12 per cent of women who had suffered no childhood problems. Equally striking, of the women who had suffered all these forms of childhood adversity together (neglect, sexual or other physical abuse), one half had been depressed in the last year.

To separate the direct impact of childhood adversity from other influences, Bifulco examined the effects of four other factors that are known to be important: loss of a parent before the age of 16, parental conflict, parental psychiatric problems, and poverty.

As in previous studies, all these were strongly associated with depression in the adult women. However, this association was found only when coupled with neglect or abuse. If you had lost a parent, for example, or had disharmonious, poor or psychologically disturbed parents, it made you more likely to be depressed in adulthood only if you had also been abused or neglected. This research poses a major challenge to the genetic triumphalism that has swept our media.

Try reanalysing Bifulco's findings from the widely held assumption that depression is substantially caused by genetic factors. First of all, if depression is four times more common among poor women than in rich women, does that mean that the poor have

much more "depressing" genes? There is not a scrap of evidence to support the idea, although it is theoretically possible.

Even if genes explain why the poor are more depressed, how come women who are neglected or abused are so much more likely to be depressed than those who are not? Surely, these are purely environmental experiences which have nothing to do with a girl's genetic make-up.

The genetic retort is that, yes, the neglect and abuse are environmental but perhaps the propensity to inflict them on children is genetic - that parents are born with genes that make them into neglectful or abusive parents. There is a small amount of evidence that parenting styles may be slightly influenced by genes but, taken overall, Bifulco's new book makes genetic explanations of depression seem a very long shot.

For more likely is that genes play a negligible role in much depression and that being abused and neglected as a child is

depressing. Being poor - not bad genes - makes stressed-out parents more likely to be abusive and neglectful. This environmental explanation has the added practical attraction of suggesting that if we reduced the proportion of people being raised in poor and abusive or neglectful homes, the amount of adult depression would presumably decline.

Sadly, despite the potential significance of Bifulco's discoveries, they have attracted just one small newspaper report. Unlike, for example, the American evolutionary psychologist Steven Pinker, author of *How The Mind Works*, whose contribution to our understanding of human psychology is tiny by comparison, there have been no in-depth interviews with Bifulco and no lengthy articles commissioned from her.

Oliver James's *Brillain on the Couch - Why We're Unhappier Compared With 1950 Despite Being Richer* is now available in paperback (Arrow, £7.99).

OLIVER JAMES



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MEDIA

New kids on the box

Jane Root, appointed controller of BBC 2 last week, joins a new generation of executives who are dominating the upper echelons of more egalitarian, meritocratic television networks. By Paul McCann

In 1979 the BBC aired a programme which is crucial to understanding the new generation of people who have taken over British television. It was an episode of *Arena*, edited by a 32-year-old called Alan Yentob, which took a look at the song "My Way". The programme was originally inspired by Sid Vicious's punk interpretation of the song and paid affectionate homage to a tune that was an icon of popular culture.

Jane Root, who was appointed controller of BBC 2 last week, says it is not only one of her favourite programmes, but that it was influential in the direction of her career; and that of Michael Jackson, the chief executive of Channel 4.

Root and Jackson are now in control of the higher-brow end of television and they started their careers together. They made a programme about television called *Open the Box* which led on to a series, *The Media Show*, for Channel 4.

"That episode of *Arena* took a particular cultural artefact and played around with it," says Root. "To people like me and Michael, it is the Daddy of all the television we later did." The reason that particular *Arena* is so popular with the new generation controlling television is that they, too, are the products of television, itself a popular artefact. "I was totally obsessed," says Root. "From keeping the entire family silent during *Star Trek* as a kid, to starting my own film society when I was at sixth-form college, I have always been a fan. We all have."

While Michael Jackson did Media Studies at the Polytechnic of Central London, Root studied International Relations at Sussex University. "But alongside my degree I spent all my time doing film studies and any option I could find of the media."

Jane Root's appointment marks the way that people who grew up with television have now taken it over. They have replaced the generations whose roots were either Oxbridge and journalism or the world of variety theatre.

The Polytechnic of Central London's media studies course was one of the first in the country, when the discipline was still heavily influenced by the Sixties explosion in structuralism: television is being run now by people who learned first how to take it apart. That is why Root doesn't find it quite so surprising as the rest of us that two people who worked on the same television show 12 years ago have ended up running



MICHAEL JACKSON, 40
Education: Polytechnic of Central London. Way into TV: Organiser of lobby group for creation of Channel 4; became controller of BBC 2 in 1993. BBC 1 in 1996. Now: Chief executive of Channel 4



MAL YOUNG, 41
Education: Liverpool College of Art. Way into TV: Script-writer on 'Brookside'; head of Channel 5 drama. Now: BBC head of drama series

a television channel each. "Media studies hadn't quite taken off. People didn't think television was something you made programmes about. There had been the odd programme, but no serious look at it."

Mal Young, who became head of drama series at the BBC this year, has been a friend of Root's for 10 years and is part of the new generation at the top: "It's those of us from normal families who watched a lot of television in the Sixties and Seventies taking over."

If there is a new generation in charge of television there is a key factor in their success: the creation of Channel 4. Jackson and Root made *The Media Show* for Channel 4 before Jackson used the experience to join the BBC and Root formed her own production company, Wall to Wall, with



JANE ROOT, 41 Education: University of Sussex. Way into TV: Researcher at British Film Institute; set up independent production company Wall to Wall; joined BBC in 1996. Now: Controller of BBC 2

her business partner Alex Graham.

Wall to Wall became one of Channel 4's biggest suppliers, but its importance, believes Root, lies in the way independent production companies gave access to television outsiders for the first time: "What's interesting is that people in television now can have diverse careers."

They don't have to climb slowly through an organisation they only got into in the first place because of their background, she believes. Instead there are creative people in charge who have run their own businesses, as well as making programmes. There is also a class dimension to the change wrought by Channel 4 and the independents:

"The independents have encouraged a meritocracy," says Mal Young. "I got my break through Phil Redmond and Mersey Television. It was possible to learn the skills and meet the right people. It became possible for people who had normal jobs to get into television."

Jane Root agrees: "The BBC is a much more egalitarian place now. There is a sense that we have a more varied view of the world."

The BBC also has to get some credit for bringing on a more representative generation of managers. The promotion of Root shows it has

been particularly successful in bringing on women.

In 1990 the corporation looked at the number of women in senior positions and discovered that just 10 per cent of senior executives were women. The corporation set itself targets for all its levels of management and now has 29.1 per cent of senior executives who are women: the target it set itself is 30 per cent. It has already surpassed its target for senior managers.

"When I got my first job as an editor in radio I was the only woman at my level," says Jenny Abramsky, who was appointed director of radio last month. "I spent all my time in meetings full of men. For eight years as I took other jobs I remained the only woman. When I got pregnant I went to the personnel manager who dealt with my man-



SUE FARR, 42
Education: University of Reading. Way into TV: Marketing background; communications director for Thames TV. Now: Director of communications and marketing, BBC



PETER SALMON, 42
Education: University of Warwick. Way into TV: Newspaper reporter; head of factual at Channel 4. Now: Controller of BBC 1



THE WORD ON THE STREET

A POSTSCRIPT to our story last Friday, which questioned whether *The Guardian* acted with two MPs to name Dominic Lawson, the editor of *The Sunday Telegraph*, as an MI6 agent. We suggested that *The Guardian's* interest might not be unconnected to Lawson's role when he was at *The Spectator* in getting Richard "KGB" Gott to quit *The Guardian*. "How dare you accuse us of holding a grudge," a *Guardian* employee warned. "We'll get you, you bastards."

IN CYBERSPACE, no one can hear you scream, particularly on the "Friends of Conrad Black" homepage, the loneliest corner of the Internet. But first you have to find it. The usual web directories reckon there are 648 sites devoted in whole or part to the Canadian media magnate. Crikey, no time to go through all those, so we settle for a quick blast from the "Conrad Black Waltz" site. A sample verse: "He rattles my cage/ He pulls on my chain/ He owns 100 per cent of my brain/ It simplifies thinking/ So I can't complain/ I live under Conrad Black's reign". My name's Boris Johnson, goodnight.

RICHARD BRANSON seems to be having as much joy entering Chinese airspace as he is operating a rail franchise. Anyway, like the 08.17 to Manchester, we digress. The transport correspondent of one august broadsheet thought he would go to his paper's Christmas party as a Virgin Railways conductor. Virgin were only too willing to oblige. The uniform arrived—but too late to be any use.

Time for out with the old, and in with the new

After 30 years of success, 'Time Out', the Londoner's listings bible, is getting a revamped look and a different emphasis. By Rhys Williams

THE ACCUSATION periodically levelled at Tony Elliott, founder and publisher of *Time Out*, is that he has only ever had one good idea. If that is true, it was a better one than most of us will ever have.

Thirty years ago, Elliott invested in a single commodity called information, and his status as a millionaire international publisher is probably more a testament to its enduring value than the talents he has variously assembled on Tottenham Court Road.

The London listings weekly has just celebrated 30, mostly happy, years. It failed to spot the first year of punk and there was the strike over equal pay in 1981 which, like a bad dose of acne, kept the then teenager off the streets for a few months. However, for most of its history *Time Out* has been out there on its own, unchallenged, successful in a comfort zone of de facto monopoly.

But that is changing. There is a new editor, Vicki Mayer, talking about a fresh approach and there are nervous glances towards a quartet of thrusting young rival titles—the listings supplements that now come free every week with *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *The Times* and the *Evening Standard* represent 1 million copies of competition. From a

circulation high of 108,000 (special editions can sometimes top 130,000) four years ago, the last ABC saw *Time Out* slip to 98,000. The next return is expected to be lower.

The onset of middle age, and pulling power on the part of a wholesaler make—time for a wholesale make-over, the magazine equivalent of a visit by Carol Smillie and the team from *Changing Rooms*? Elliott prefers to talk in terms of "100,000-mile service"—change the plugs, clean the filter, new treads;

'Not all Londoners live in Notting Hill, work in advertising, and earn 50 grand'

oh yes, and a new driver too.

"I'm sort of happy with [Time Out]," he says. "But it needs a change, and the best way to do that is from outside. It just needs that fresh infusion of personality to wake everything up a little bit. Everyone interviewed said all the opening pages needed to be radically changed—we need to reflect more urgently what's happening in London."

Specifically, Elliott would like to see its news coverage expanded and infused with the

campaigning zeal that the *Standard* under Max Hastings appears to have misplaced. Its consumer section needs sharpening ("We screwed up on this whole wallpaper, interior design boom"), its writing made more accessible ("for the benefit of the readers, rather than ourselves or other critics").

Above all, he says, *Time Out* London must learn from its younger sister in New York which, after just over three years, is selling 85,000 copies a week, and is close to breaking

news will help, but so will what he calls "service journalism"—specials on specific areas of town, cheap eats, best bars and so on. "In my opinion a lot of editors care about it, but decide that somehow it's a bit boring for the reader, when in fact that's precisely what they want to keep."

A former features editor of *TV Times* and *Options*, Mayer, 34, launched *Inside Soap* magazine in 1992, took it from monthly to fortnightly, before going to Australia where she was editorial director of the antipodean equivalent of *Sugar*.

"Londoners don't live in Notting Hill, work in advertising and earn 50 grand," she says. "Not everyone goes clubbing or to the cinema. They are eating, drinking and shopping. We need to reflect that without dumbing down. If there's a new gadget shop on Ken High Street, for instance, we need to write about it."

"There's also the reality that it's difficult to live in London, particularly for people in their early twenties. Rents are high and it's hard to get around, and that can put you off. We have to be writing about that, about transport, rents, unscrupulous landlords, how to get your deposit back. No other publication is campaigning on behalf of London at the moment."

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Candidates will need to demonstrate an interest in and knowledge of community health issues, as well as commitment to the values of a trade union and professional association.

The CPVA is an autonomous section of the trade union MSF.

For an application pack please write or fax to Martin Goodman, MSF Centre, 33/37 Moreland Street, London EC1V 8BB (tel: 0171 503 3030 e-mail: goodson@msf.org.uk) Closing date for receipt of completed applications Friday 8th January 1999.



Media Communications Group Plc

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We are a leading daily Arabic newspaper - part of an International company. The candidate profiles are as follows:

Deputy Editor-in-Chief £260,000 & Senior Affairs Journalist £220,000

• A minimum of 10 years experience working in leading Arab publications is a prerequisite for both positions.

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• A minimum of 5 years experience working in leading Arab publications is required.

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The Personnel Manager, MCG Plc, 66 Hammersmith Road, London W14 8TY

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NEW FILMS

THE PRINCE OF EGYPT (U)

Directed by Brenda Chapman, Simon Wells.
Steve Hickner
Voiced by: Val Kilmer, Ralph Fiennes.

DreamWorks hooch Jeffrey Katzenberg envisaged his cartoon *Life of Moses*, "painted by Claude Monet and photographed by David Lean". The end result winds up as *The Ten Commandments* by way

of Joseph and his Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat. West End: ABC Baker Street, ABC Tottenham Court Road, Barbican Screen, Clapham Picture House, Elephant & Castle Coronet, Empire Leicester Square, Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero

GENERAL RELEASE

ANTZ (PG)

See The Independent Recommends, right.
West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Phoenix Cinema, Plaza, Ritzy Cinema, Screen on the Green, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero

BABE: PIG IN THE CITY (U)

In the follow-up to *Babe*, knockabout comedy is kept to a minimum in favour of a bleak animatronic fairytale. West End: ABC Baker Street, ABC Tottenham Court Road, Clapham Picture House, Elephant & Castle Coronet, Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Plaza, Rio Cinema, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero

BLADE (18)

A techno soundtrack hums and grinds behind its monotonous arcade game thriller about a New York vampire-killer tackling a power-crazed new bloodsucker. Noise and martial-arts action mask its tony pedigree.
West End: Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End

THE BOYS (18)

Out of jail after serving a sentence for GBE, oldest "boy" Brett Sprague (David Wenham) moves back into his mum's drab suburban home, terrifies his girlfriend and turns his younger brothers into petty henchmen. *The Boys* spotlights the downside of life Down Under - it's potent predatory stuff.
West End: Metro, Ritzy Cinema

DANCING AT LUGHNASA (PG)

Less a dance, more of a trudge, this Ireland-set *La* is given backbone by Meryl Streep's regal performance. West End: Curzon Mayfair, Notting Hill Coronet, Rio Cinema

DEAD MAN'S CURVE (15)

Writer-director Dan Rosen must have had some terrible experiences at university. All the students at his nameless American college are trying to butcher each other, led into temptation by an obscure regulation that awards straight A grades to the room-mates of suicides. Though not as deliciously nasty as the *Scream* films, *Dead Man's Curve* delivers a respectable quota of drive-in shocks.
West End: ABC Piccadilly

ELIZABETH (15)

Shekhar Kapur's follow-up to *Bandit Queen* is the story of a female figurehead struggling to gain purchase in a male world. But Kapur largely neglects the opportunities for fun in a story of independence triumphing over cruelty.
West End: ABC Tottenham Court Road, Odeon Haymarket, Odeon Mezzanine, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Virgin Fulham Road

SEASIDE LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS (18)

Gillian's adaption tilts at Ralph Steadman cartoonery for its tale of a drug-fuelled journalistic assignment. The film soon descends into a carnival of narcotic lunacy, with the one stand-out being Johnny Depp - who brings Hunter S Thompson into half-headed, pigeon-toed life.
West End: ABC Baker Street, Empire Leicester Square, Odeon Camden Town, Ritzy Cinema, Virgin Haymarket

RONIN (15)

See The Independent Recommends, right.
West End: Odeon Kensington, Odeon West End, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road

RUSH HOUR (15)

Jackie Chan and Chris Tucker star in this hit-and-miss affair. West End: Elephant & Castle Coronet, Gate Notting Hill, Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Plaza, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Chelsea, Virgin Trocadero, Warner Village West End

SLUMS OF BEVERLY HILLS (18)

See The Independent Recommends, right.
West End: ABC Piccadilly, ABC Shaftesbury Avenue

TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE (18)

Once ridiculously held up as a video nasty, Tobe Hooper's thrill-shop chiller is, rather, a unholy celebration of the blood-lust urges within white-trash America, ushering a bunch of generic teens to their doom among a family of unemployed slaughtermen. Explicit violence is thin on the ground; instead it's the alien, voodoo mood which dominates. West End: ABC Shaftesbury Avenue

THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MARY (15)

The latest comedy from the tasteless writer-director team of Peter and Bobby Farrelly. The film is basically a soft-centred romantic comedy of the kind that drifts out of Hollywood on a regular basis. The gags never amount to more than vulgar icing on an exceptionally bland cake. West End: Odeon Mezzanine, Screen on the Green, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Haymarket

VELVET GOLDMINE (18)

Jonathan Rhys Myers plays a Bowie-esque idol in gutter make-up; his friend and mentor Curt Wild (Ewan McGregor) is a self-destructive US rocker in the Lou Reed-Iggy Pop mould. The story of how these characters are bound together is told in a film brimming with intelligent ideas. West End: Curzon Soho, Rio Cinema

LA VIE REVEE DES ANGES (THE DREAM LIFE OF ANGELS) (18)

Iris (Elodie Bouchez) is a gamine but impoverished drifter who meets Marie (Natacha Regnier) while temping at a clothes sweatshop. They become friends and move in together in a stunning first feature for Erick Zonca.
West End: ABC Swiss Centre, Curzon Minima, Phoenix Cinema, Screen on the Green, Virgin Fulham Road

THE WISDOM OF CROCODILES (15)

Jude Law plays a contemporary vampire who wines and dines his victims before he goes for the jugular. West End: ABC Pantown Street

of Joseph and his Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat. West End: ABC Baker Street, ABC Tottenham Court Road, Barbican Screen, Clapham Picture House, Elephant & Castle Coronet, Empire Leicester Square, Hammersmith Virgin, Odeon Camden Town, Odeon Kensington, Odeon Marble Arch, Odeon Swiss Cottage, Ritzy Cinema, UCI Whiteleys, Virgin Fulham Road, Virgin Trocadero

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HAMPSTEAD
ABC (0870-9020413) ♦ Belize
Park Babe: Pig in the City 1.30pm,
3.40pm, 6pm Out of Sight 8.10pm
The Parent Trap 2.20pm, 4.35pm,
8.10pm The Prince of Egypt
1.15pm, 3.30pm, 6.15pm, 8.35pm

HARROW
SAFARI (0181-426 0303) ♦ Harrow-on-the-Hill/Broadway & Wealdstone Doll Sakaje Raksha 1.30pm,
5pm Fire 8.45pm Kudrat 8.45pm
The Soldier (Asian Film) 1.30pm,
5pm

HARROW
WARNER VILLAGE (0181-427 9009) ♦ Harrow-on-the-Hill Antz
11.40am, 1.40pm, 3.40pm,
5.40pm, 7.40pm, 9.40pm Babe: Pig
in the City 10.40am, 11.10am,
1.10pm, 4.10pm, 4.40pm
Blade 2.45pm, 2.50pm, 2.55pm,
5.25pm, 8.30pm Mulan 10.45am,
12.45pm, 2.45pm, 4.45pm The
Negotiator 9.10pm Out of Sight
6.05pm, 8.45pm The Parent Trap
10.15am, 1.05pm, 3.55pm,
6.45pm, 9.30pm The Prince of
Egypt 9.35am, 12.05pm, 2.30pm,
4.35pm, 7.25pm, 9.50pm Rush
Hour 11am, 1.30pm, 3.30pm, 4pm,
6.30pm, 9pm Small
Soldiers 10.05am, 12.55pm,
2.45pm, 4.45pm

HOLLOWAY
ODEON (08705 050007) ♦ Archway Antz 12.20pm, 2.15pm,
4.15pm, 6.45pm Babe: Pig in the
City 3.05pm, Blade 8.45pm
The Mask of Zorro 12.30pm,
3.45pm, 8.15pm Mulan 1.20pm,
5.20pm, 8.20pm Out of
Sight 3pm, 5.45pm, 8.25pm The
Parent Trap 12.10pm, 3pm,
5.50pm, 8.35pm The Prince of
Egypt 12.05pm, 2.20pm, 4.35pm,
6.30pm, 9pm Rush Hour 12.05pm,
2.20pm, 3.50pm, 4.35pm, 6.15pm,
6.50pm, 8.30pm, 9.05pm Small
Soldiers 12.35pm

JILDORD
ODEON (08705 050007) ♦ Gants
Hill Babe: Pig in the City 1.10pm,
3.35pm, 6pm The Mask of Zorro
1.50pm, 5pm, 8.10pm The
Negotiator 8pm Out of Sight 8.15pm
The Parent Trap 11.55am, 2.30pm,
5.30pm The Prince of Egypt
11.40am, 4pm, 4.20pm, 6.30pm,
8.30pm Rush Hour 1.30pm,
3.30pm, 6.20pm, 8.40pm

KILBURN
Tricycle Theatre (0171-328 1000)
♦ Kilburn Dancing at Lughnasa
6.30pm Mulan 1.30pm, 4pm Out
of Sight 8.45pm

KINGSTON
ABC OPTIONS (0870-9020409)
BR: Kingston Antz 6.10pm Babe:
Pig in the City 1.10pm, 3.25pm The
Parent Trap 2pm, 5.10pm, 8pm The
Prince of Egypt 1.10pm, 3.40pm,
6pm, 8.30pm Rush Hour 8.30pm

MUSWELL HILL
ODEON (08705 050007) ♦ Highgate
Babe: Pig in the City 12.20pm,
The Mask of Zorro 11.30am,
2.30pm, 5.20pm, 8.20pm Out of
Sight 8.25pm The Parent Trap
12.15pm, 3pm, 5.45pm The Prince
of Egypt 11.55am, 2.05pm,
4.30pm, 6.45pm, 9pm

NELSON
CORONET (0181-888 2519) ♦
Tunbridge Wells Babe: Pig in the
City 1.15am, 4pm The Mask of
Zorro 2pm, 5.15pm, 8.10pm The
Prince of Egypt 1.30pm, 4pm,
6.20pm, 8.35pm Rush Hour 2pm,
6.30pm, 9pm Saving
Private Ryan 8.30pm Small
Soldiers 11.30am, 2pm, 4pm

SUTTON
NEW (0900-888990) ♦ Morden
Antz 11.30am, 1.30pm, 4pm Babe:
Pig in the City 11.15am, 1.45pm,
4.30pm, 7pm Blade 8.45pm Fear
And Loathing in Las Vegas 6.45pm
The Mask Of Zorro 12.30pm, 3pm,
6pm, 9pm Out of Sight 9.30pm
The Parent Trap 11.45am, 4.45pm,
6.25pm, 8.45pm Rush Hour 2pm,
4.15pm, 6.45pm, 9.15pm Saving
Private Ryan 8.30pm Small
Soldiers 11.30am

UXBRIDGE
ODEON (08705 050007) ♦ 050007
Tunbridge Wells Babe: Pig in the
City 1.15am, 4pm The Mask of
Zorro 1.55pm, 5.05pm, 8.05pm
The Prince of Egypt 1.20pm,
4.30pm, 6.35pm, 8.50pm

WALTHAMSTOW
ABC (0870-9020424) ♦ Walthamstow
Central Antz 6.30pm Babe: Pig in
the City 2.20pm, 4.40pm The
Parent Trap 2pm, 5pm, 8pm The
Prince of Egypt 1.10pm, 3.40pm,
6pm, 8.30pm Rush Hour 8.30pm

WIMBLEDON
ODEON (08705 050007) ♦ South
Wimbledon Antz 12.15pm Babe:
Pig in the City 1.10am, 1.50pm,
3.50pm The Mask Of Zorro
11.45am, 2.30pm, 5.20pm, 8.15pm
Out of Sight 5.35pm, 8.30pm The
Parent Trap 12.25pm, 3pm,
5.45pm The Prince of Egypt
1.10am, 1.30pm, 4.10pm, 6.30pm
Rush Hour 2pm, 4.10pm, 6.30pm,
8.35pm

WOODFORD
ABC (0181-989 3463) ♦ South
Woodford Antz 6.20pm Babe: Pig
in the City 1.30pm, 3.30pm Lock
Stock & Two Smoking Barrels
2.15pm, 5.15pm, 8.15pm The
Prince of Egypt 1.0pm, 3.45pm,
6.15pm, 8.45pm Rush Hour 6.20pm,
8.35pm

PURLEY
ABC (0870-9020407) BR: Purley
Babe: Pig in the City 2.10pm,
4.10pm The Parent Trap 2pm,
5.05pm, 8.05pm The Prince of
Egypt 1.10pm, 3.30pm, 6.05pm,
8.25pm Rush Hour 6.20pm,
8.35pm

PUTNEY
ABC (0870-9020401) ♦ Putney
Bridge/BR: Putney Antz 6pm Babe:
Pig in the City 1.35pm, 3.30pm Out
of Sight 8.15pm The Parent Trap
2.15pm, 5.15pm, 8.15pm The
Prince of Egypt 1.0pm, 3.45pm,
6.15pm, 8.45pm

RICHMOND
ODEON (08705 050007) BR: Richmon
The Mask Of Zorro 1.30pm,
3.40pm Babe: Pig in the City
1.30pm, 3.40pm Dancing At Lugh
nasa 7pm, 9.20pm Mulan 1.20pm
The Negotiator 8.40pm The Parent
Trap 1.30pm, 4pm, 8pm The
Prince of Egypt 1.0pm, 3.45pm,
6.15pm, 8.45pm

PECKHAM
PREMIER (0181-235 3006) BR:
Peckham Rye Babe: Pig in the
City 12.35pm, 2.30pm, 4.25pm, 6.25pm
Blade 9.15pm The Mask of
Zorro 2.45pm, 5pm, 7.15pm,
9.30pm Mulan 12.45pm The
Negotiator 8.04pm The Parent Trap
12.20pm, 3pm, 5.40pm, 8.20pm
The Prince of Egypt 1pm, 3.30pm,
4.30pm, 6.45pm, 9pm

REID
ODEON (08705 050007) ♦ Reid
Antz 1.30pm, 3.40pm Babe: Pig
in the City 1.10pm, 3.10pm The
Parent Trap 2pm, 5.10pm, 8pm The
Prince of Egypt 1.10pm, 3.40pm,
6pm, 8.30pm Rush Hour 8.30pm

PUTNEY
ODEON (0870-9020407) BR: Putney
Bridge/BR: Putney Antz 6pm Babe:
Pig in the City 2.10pm, 4.10pm The
Parent Trap 2pm, 5.05pm, 8.05pm The
Prince of Egypt 1.10pm, 3.30pm, 6.05pm,
8.25pm Rush Hour 6.20pm,
8.35pm

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REID<br

TUESDAY RADIO

RADIO 1

975-99.8MHz FM
6.30 Chris Moyles. 9.00 Simon Mayo. 12.00 Kevin Greening.
2.00 Mark Radcliffe. 4.00 Dave Pearce. 8.00 Steve Lamacq - the Evening Session 9a. 10.00 John Peel. 12.00 The Brezzeflock.
2.00 Emma B. 4.00 - 6.30 Scott Mills.

RADIO 2

88.9-92.4MHz FM
6.00 Alex Lester. 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan. 9.30 Ken Bruce.
12.00 Jimmy Young. 2.00 Ed Stewart. 5.05 Johnnie Walker.
7.00 Evelyn Glennie's Classics.
8.00 Nigel Ogden. 9.00 Annual Delights. See *Pick of the Day*.
10.00 Richard Allinson. 12.00 Katrina Leskanich. 3.00 - 4.00 Mo Dutta.

RADIO 3

90.2-92.4MHz FM
6.00 On Air.

Masterworks.**10.30 Artist of the Week.****11.00 Sound Stories.****12.00 Composer of the Week:****Bizet.****1.00 The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert:** (R)**2.00 The BBC Orchestras.****4.00 Diva!****4.45 Music to Die For.****5.00 A Medieval Christmas.****5.30 Music Rooms.****6.00 Discovering Music with Leonard Slatkin.****7.00 Christmas Cocktails.**

7.30 Performances on 3. Another chance to hear ten of the most memorable concerts of the 1998 BBC Proms season at the Royal Albert Hall, London. 2: Prom 40, given on 18 August. David Wilson-Johnson (baritone), BBC Singers, BBC Symphony Orchestra/Oliver Knussen and Stephen Cleobury. Messiaen: *L'ascension*; George Benjamin: *Sometime Voices*; Robin Holloway: *Hymn to the Senses*; Scriabin: *The Poem of Ecstasy*. (R)

9.00 Postscript. Comedian and broadcaster Raina Hersch presents five personal and idiosyncratic studies of the music of our century. 2: *'The Best Alive or Dead'*. Who were the great musicians of the century?

9.20 Celebrity Trio: Thomas Ze-**PICK OF THE DAY**

FOR MANY, Christmas has become a crassly commercial, TV-dominated festival. But for some, it is still the time of year when we celebrate the arrival of the *Blue Peter* annual, *In Annual Delights* (9pm R2). Hugh Dennis surveys the history of the annual, from its Victorian origins to the first recognisably modern children's annuals.

ROBERT BANKS



hetmair (violin), Tabea Zimmermann (viola), Heinrich Schiff (cello). Schubert: String Trio in B flat, D471. Schoenberg: String Trio, Op 45. Mozart: Divertimento in E flat, K563.

10.45 Book, Music and Lyrics. Six programmes in which Robert Cushman presents a personal view of musicals, with songs from original cast recordings - some familiar, some less well known. 1: 'New Shows, Old Voices'. See *Pick of the Day*.

11.30 Jazz Notes.**12.00 Composer of the Week:****Bach. (R)****1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night.****RADIO 4****(92.4-94.6MHz FM)****6.00 Today.****9.00 NEWS: The Choice.****9.30 Carols for Choirs.****9.45 Serial: Scraps with Iannucci.****10.00 NEWS: Woman's Hour.****11.00 NEWS: A Wall to the North:****Fear.****11.30 Pollyanna.****12.00 NEWS: You and Yours.****12.57 Weather.****1.00 The World at One.****1.30 Full Orchestra.****2.00 NEWS: The Archers.****2.15 Afternoon Play: Henry's Leg.****3.00 NEWS: The Exchange: 0171****5.00 4444.****3.30 Beating the System.****3.45 Colonel Clay - Master of Disguise.****4.00 NEWS: A Good Read.****4.30 Shop Talk.****5.00 PM.****5.57 Weather.**

More sophisticated pleasures with the return of *Book, Music and Lyrics* (10.45pm R3). Robert Cushman's intelligent look at the world of musicals. Today, he sees what the older generation of musical writers have been up to lately, and compares their work to the latest blockbusters, including *Rent* (right).

ROBERT BANKS

in Wales' by Dylan Thomas.

11.00 The Now Show: Steve Punt and Hugh Dennis present a cavalcade of cutting-edge comedy with the regular team of Simon Munnery, Jane Bussmann, David Quantick, Nick Romero and Dan Freedman.

11.30 Talking Pictures.

12.00 News.

12.30 The Late Book: Out of Her Senses.

12.45 Shipping Forecast.

1.00 As World Service.

5.30 World News.

5.35 Shipping Forecast.

5.40 Inshore Forecast.

5.45 Prayer for the Day.

5.47 - 6.00 Farming Today.

RADIO 4 LW

(198kHz LV)

9.45 - 10.00 Daily Service.

12.00 - 12.44 News: Shipping Forecast.

5.54 - 5.57 Shipping Forecast.

11.30 - 12.00 Parliament.

RADIO 5 LIVE

(69.2-90.9kHz MW)

6.00 Breakfast.

9.00 Brian Hayes.

12.00 The Midday News.

1.00 Ruscoe and Co.

4.00 Drive.

7.00 News Extras.

7.30 The Life and Death of Belfast Celtic. Fifty years ago, Belfast Celtic were the finest football team in Ireland. But on 22 December 1948 their reign came to a dramatic and final end. George Best presents the first of two programmes looking at the life and death of Belfast Celtic.

8.00 Play It Again. The programme in which listeners get to choose their favourite sporting moments from the BBC archives.

9.00 When Winter Comes. What do county cricketers do in the winter when they have hung up their pads? Simon Mann investigates, with the help of the likes of Neil Fairbrother, Jack Russell and Ian Austin.

10.00 Late Night Live. The day's big stories with Steve LeFevre. Incl 10.30 Sports round-up. 11.00 News and finance. 11.30-1.00 Topical discussion.

1.00 Up All Night.

5.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports.

CLASSIC FM

(100.1-101.9MHz FM)

6.00 Nick Bailey. **8.00 Henry Kelly.** **12.00 Requests.** **2.00 Concerto:** Patterson: Little Red Riding Hood. Featuring Julie Walters, Danny DeVito and Ian Holm. London PO/Franz Welser-Most. **3.00 Jamie Clegg.** **6.30 Newsnight.**

7.00 Smooth Classics at Seven.

9.00 Evening Concert: Nicholas Tresilian introduces the Classic FM Charitable Trust Christmas Concert, recorded live at Westminster Abbey. Featuring Aline Brewer (harp), Philip Scriven (organ), Choir of Westminster Abbey, director Martin Baker. The programme includes a performance of Britten's *Ceremony of Carols*.

11.00 Alan Mann. **2.00 Concerto.**

3.00 - 6.00 Mark Griffiths.

VIRGIN RADIO

(125.7-126.0kHz MW)

6.00 Jeremy Clark. **9.30 Russ Williams.**

1.00 Nick Abbot. **4.00 Harriet Scott.** **7.30 Janey Lee Grace.** **10.00 James Merritt.**

1.00 - 6.00 Richard Allen.

WORLD SERVICE RADIO

(198kHz LW)

1.00 Newsdesk. **1.30 Discovery.**

2.00 Newsday. **2.30 Meridian (Live).** **3.00 World News.** **3.05 World Business Report.** **3.15 Sports Roundup.** **3.30 One Planet.**

4.00 - 7.00 The World Today.

TALK RADIO

6.00 Bill Overton and Sally Meen.

9.00 Scott Chisholm.

12.00 Loraine Kelly.

2.00 Anna Raeburn.

4.00 Peter Deely.

5.00 The Sports Zone.

8.00 Mike Allan.

1.00 - 6.00 Ian Collins.

SKY PREMIER

6.00 Cocoon (985) 9.00 8.00 Hello Again (987) 10.00 Fly Away Home (988) 12.00 Come On (989) 14.00 16.00 Behind the Scenes (990) 18.00 Hello Again (991) 20.00 Come On (992) 22.00 Fly Away Home (993) 24.00 Hello Again (994) 26.00 Come On (995) 28.00 Hello Again (996) 30.00 Hello Again (997) 32.00 Come On (998) 34.00 Hello Again (999) 36.00 Hello Again (999) 38.00 Hello Again (999) 40.00 Hello Again (999) 42.00 Hello Again (999) 44.00 Hello Again (999) 46.00 Hello Again (999) 48.00 Hello Again (999) 50.00 Hello Again (999) 52.00 Hello Again (999) 54.00 Hello Again (999) 56.00 Hello Again (999) 58.00 Hello Again (999) 60.00 Hello Again (999) 62.00 Hello Again (999) 64.00 Hello Again (999) 66.00 Hello Again (999) 68.00 Hello Again (999) 70.00 Hello Again (999) 72.00 Hello Again (999) 74.00 Hello Again (999) 76.00 Hello Again (999) 78.00 Hello Again (999) 80.00 Hello Again (999) 82.00 Hello Again (999) 84.00 Hello Again (999) 86.00 Hello Again (999) 88.00 Hello Again (999) 90.00 Hello Again (999) 92.00 Hello Again (999) 94.00 Hello Again (999) 96.00 Hello Again (999) 98.00 Hello Again (999) 100.00 Hello Again (999) 102.00 Hello Again (999) 104.00 Hello Again (999) 106.00 Hello Again (999) 108.00 Hello Again (999) 110.00 Hello Again (999) 112.00 Hello Again (999) 114.00 Hello Again (999) 116.00 Hello Again (999) 118.00 Hello Again (999) 120.00 Hello Again (999) 122.00 Hello Again (999) 124.00 Hello Again (999) 126.00 Hello Again (999) 128.00 Hello Again (999) 130.00 Hello Again (999) 132.00 Hello Again (999) 134.00 Hello Again (999) 136.00 Hello Again (999) 138.00 Hello Again (999) 140.00 Hello Again (999) 142.00 Hello Again (999) 144.00 Hello Again (999) 146.00 Hello Again (999) 148.00 Hello Again (999) 150.00 Hello Again (999) 152.00 Hello Again (999) 154.00 Hello Again (999) 156.00 Hello Again (999) 158.00 Hello Again (999) 160.00 Hello Again (999) 162.00 Hello Again (999) 164.00 Hello Again (999) 166.00 Hello Again (999) 168.00 Hello Again (999) 170.00 Hello Again (999) 172.00 Hello Again (999) 174.00 Hello Again (999) 176.00 Hello Again (999) 178.00 Hello Again (999) 180.00 Hello Again (999) 182.00 Hello Again (999) 184.00 Hello Again (999) 186.00 Hello Again (999) 188.00 Hello Again (999) 190.00 Hello Again (999) 192.00 Hello Again (999) 194.00

BBC1



MATTHEW SWEET

TELEVISION REVIEW

TV CRITICS. The swine. Don't they realise whilst they're doing? Don't they know how much they can hurt people? I feel last night's Clive took on the subject of science fiction. As the show opened, Clive James was sitting there as usual on his supine, "TV soft-as-severe and non-perturbant as a Japanese Buddha." "Welcome to the television programme about television programmes," he drawled, the Zen-like paradox somnolent, adding to the effect of his appearance. And for the next 30 minutes, he did them most terrible, unforgettable thing. He dismissed *Blakes' Seven*. Even worse, he mocked "Telepat, Cally" into my wristwatch. Not often, anyway. But watching Clive James pose out of some of the most intense experiences of my childhood was more than I could bear. Who was he to be snide about. Scam of the Jagrath? Or to suggest that there was something truly absurd going at the Mandrels from the planet Eekon? Didn't they real, that they were making tasteless jokes at the expense of people's deeply held beliefs? I know the blasphemy leaves don't cover such matters, but I understand. Okay, so the Fleet Office of Carlton Communications and stage a protest by publicly burning a copy of *May Week Was in June*. Last week, Carlton was forced to take material in a documentary about a quiz hero-something ring. They ought to be fined another million at least for the interviews that take place between Clive James and his guests, which likely scarily attempt to pass as natural conversation.

Last night's principal irritant was with the connect Greg Proops, whose connections with the world of TV sci-fi are rather tenuous (the once presented a quiz show about the subject on Channel 4). He seemed to have been asked to appear on the show mainly to raise through a series of well-rehearsed and well-worn

"TV critics."

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